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Politics, Economy and Religion in a Near Eastern Periphery: The Region of Baḥrayn in East Arabia *c.* 1050 – *c.* 1400 CE

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Abstract

The region of Baḥrayn in eastern Arabia during the post-Qarmāṭian era has received little attention from scholars because of the scarcity of local written sources and the daunting task of gathering scattered small pieces of information from other sources in more than one language. This thesis focuses on the politics, geopolitics, economy, literature and religion of Baḥrayn from *c*. 1050 to *c*. 1400 CE. It consists of eight chapters in addition to an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction presents the research framework of the thesis. World-systems Analysis in a pre-capitalist setting is used to analyse Baḥrayn's hierarchical position in the Near East according to its economic, political and cultural characteristics. It also sets out the historical background and context of the region, presents the thesis' questions and structure, reviews modern studies and summarises the extant literary and archaeological evidence. Chapter One describes the historical geography and economy of Baḥrayn and analyses the impact of the region's geography and the wider economic context on its history. Chapter Two studies the two rebellions against the Qarāmiṭa on the island of Uwāl and in the city of al-Qaṭīf, which led to the establishment of the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj and the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās. Chapters Three and Four deal with the rise and decline of the ʿUyūnid emirate (1077-1230s CE) and study the ʿUyūnids' institutions, including their administration and army formation. Chapter Five concentrates on the powers that ruled the region of Baḥrayn after the fall of the ʿUyūnid emirate in 1230s CE: the ʿUqaylid emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ and the deserts of Baḥrayn and Najd, and the Iranian-based polities that ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. Chapter Six focuses on literature produced in Baḥrayn, presenting biographies of its poets and analyses of the commentary of the poetry collection of the poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī and Abū al-Buhlūl's letter. It also examines the relationship between the poets and the emirs of the ʿUyūnid emirate. Finally, Chapters Seven and Eight shed light on religion in Baḥrayn. They examine the region's communities of Shīʿites and Sunnis which appear to have adhered to popular forms of Ismāʿīlism, Twelverism, Ḥanafism and Shāfiʿism. The question of scholars and scholarship in Baḥrayn from the twelfth to the fourteenth century is revisited. It is argued that the current consensus that attributes a number of 12th-14th century Twelver scholars who held the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī to Baḥrayn lacks early evidence, appeared in a Safavid context and indeed contrasts with the evidence for the region's peripherality and other evidence that suggests a lack of scholars in the region.

Declaration of Authorship:

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by me and is based on my work, and that it has been written only for the University of Edinburgh as part of the PhD programme. The references I used for this research are acknowledged and cited in full.

Faisal Alwazzan

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction

1. The Region of Baḥrayn (*c.*1050–*c.*1400) and the World-systems Analysis.

The subject of this thesis is the history of eastern Arabia, known as the region of Baḥrayn, from the mid-eleventh century to the end of the fourteenth century. It covers four main themes: the historical geography and economy of the region, the political entities that ruled the region, the Baḥraynī literature and the question of religion and scholars in Baḥrayn.

The thesis argues that the region of Baḥrayn in eastern Arabia was in a peripheral then a semi-peripheral status in the context of the wider Islamic and Eurasian world of the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries. The region was geographically remote, relatively isolated and inhabited overwhelmingly by nomads who challenged the authority of the sedentary polities in the few towns. The economy of the region during the eleventh and twelfth centuries appears to have been in recession and its seaports were often marginalised by the seaports of the eastern shores of the Gulf. The economy of Baḥrayn during the early thirteenth century began to improve after its seaports were annexed by Iranian-based polities, though retaining its marginality. This marginal economic status had political and cultural consequences. Baḥrayn's indigenous political entities possessed weak military forces, lacked central authority and were in a weak position among the wider regional polities. The settled ʿUyūnid emirate was hardly noticed by outside chroniclers due to the emirate's self-imposed isolation which was a result of its lack of maritime and overland activities, its orientation towards agriculture and its political instability. In contrast, its successor, the ʿUqaylid emirate, was 'nomadic' and better known to outsiders. Its emirs served as proxy warriors in the Mongol-Mamlūk War. They later became traders and transporters of commodities, linking the markets of the Mongol-affiliated polities in the Gulf with the Mamlūk Empire via its caravan trade. The scholarly and cultural output in Baḥrayn in this period appears to have been low and limited to Arabic poetry and prose. Religious 'sects' in Baḥrayn were diverse. They included forms of Ismāʿīlism/Qarmaṭism, later replaced by Twelver Shīʿism which appears to have had folkloric, unlegalistic and 'unorthodox' characteristics. Sunnis were also present but lacked scholars and seem to have been mainly represented by the ruling elites who belonged to Ḥanafism and Shāfiʿism.

It is important to begin by explaining the characteristics of peripheral and semi-peripheral areas before discussing the reasons for describing the region as a periphery. The description will be used to denote not only the region's geographic location near the edge of powerful core areas—i.e. the empires of the Seljūqs, the Fāṭimids, and later the Mamlūks and Mongols, but also its insignificant political, economic and cultural power in comparison with these surrounding core areas. The term 'periphery' (as it is used in this thesis) is not meant to imply the exact same modern definition used in the World-Systems Analysis which analyses the World-systems starting from the sixteenth century and from a primarily Eurocentric perspective. Rather, it means a periphery in the context of what has been called 'pre-capitalist settings' which shares some aspects of the modern theory that is suitable and applicable to the medieval and even ancient periods.[1]

'Core-Periphery Relations' is a branch of the modern World-systems Analysis which was initially developed by Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). He argued that the world can be divided into core areas, semi-peripheral areas and peripheral areas. The status of an area is determined by the area's degree of control over and role in the World economy, as well as its position in the world hierarchy. He dates the beginning of this World-system to the period of 1450–1640 CE when Western Europe became the hegemon of the world and modern Capitalism began to emerge. He defines the core as the developed and industrialised area, whereas the periphery is the underdeveloped and poor area which exports raw material and is exploited by the core. The semi-periphery was something between the two.[2]

However, medieval and even ancient periods also had their World-systems which, in fact, had developed an economic system that paved the way for Europeans who took over it in the sixteenth century.[3] According to Hall, the anthropologists Pailes and Whitecotton (1975, 1979) were the pioneers in applying a modified version of the World-systems Analysis to the pre-

[1] For a literature review of the World-systems analysis see for example Thomas D. Hall, 'World-Systems: An Appraisal,' in *World-Systems Theory in Practice: Leadership, Production and Exchange*, ed. Nick Kardulias (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 1-23.
[2] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of European World-Economy, 1600-1750* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), 349-351.
[3] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 8-9.

capitalist settings, i.e. before the sixteenth century.[4] Modelski and Thompson (1996) traced the origins of the modern World-system and dated it to at least a millennium ago.[5] Furthermore, Gills and Frank took the origins of the system back to 5000 years ago.[6] Therefore, there have been several attempts to subject areas in medieval and ancient periods to the World-systems Analysis.

David Wilkinson characterises the three categories of core, semi-peripheral and peripheral areas in pre-modern periods as follows: 1) a core is central, older, advanced, wealthy and powerful; 2) a semi-periphery is strongly connected to the core and is younger, fringeward, remote, more recently attached, weaker, poorer and more backward; and 3) a periphery is weakly connected to core areas, an area of nomads and peasant subsistence producers who have not yet been attached to a city.[7]

David Wilkinson, who does not seem to have studied the region of Baḥrayn extensively, noted its economic position and placed it in a semi-peripheral status in his maps of the World-systems of 1212 CE and 1478 CE (see figure 1).

[4] Thomas D. Hall, 'World-Systems: An Appraisal,' in *World-Systems Theory in Practice: Leadership, Production and Exchange*, ed. Nick Kardulias (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 3, 20 cited R. Pailes and J. Whitecotton, 'Greater Southwest and Mesoamerican World-Systems' Paper presented at the Southwestern Anthropological Association Meeting, Santa Fe, NM. 1975; R. Pailes and J. Whitecotton, 'The Greater Southwest and Mesoamerican World-System: An Exploratory Model for Frontier Relationships,' in *The Frontier: Comparative Studies,* vol.2, ed. W. Savage and S. Thompson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), 105-121.
[5] G. Modelski and W. Thompson, *Leading Sectors and World Powers: The Coevolution of Global Economics and Politics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996).
[6] B. Gills and A. Frank, '5000 Years of World System History: The Cumulation of Accumulation,' in *Core/Periphery Relations in Precapitalist World*s, ed. Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas Hall (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 67-112.
[7] David Wilkinson, 'Cores, Peripheries and Civilizations,' in *Core/Periphery Relations in Precapitalist World*s, ed. Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas Hall (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 121.

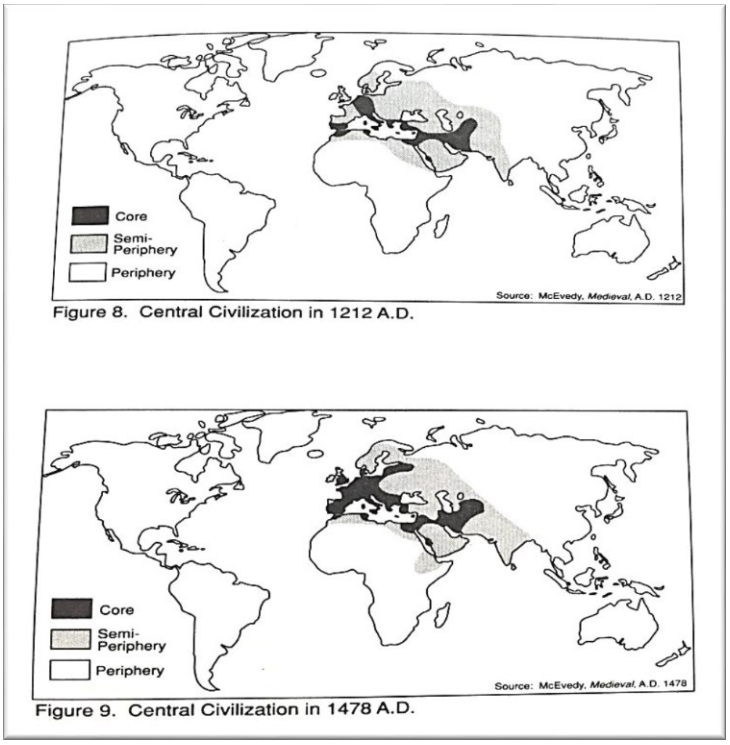

Figure 1: Baḥrayn's semi-peripheral status in Wilkinson's maps of the World-systems of 1212 CE and 1478 CE (See David Wilkinson, 'Cores, Peripheries and Civilizations', 147.)

The region of Baḥrayn *c*.1050–*c*.1400 CE appears to have possessed some characteristics of both peripherality and semi-peripherality.[8] Post-Qarmāṭian Baḥrayn, including the three main cities of al-Aḥsāʾ, al-Qaṭīf and the island of Uwāl, was characterised, as this thesis argues, by: a) poor connections to the more developed core areas because of geographic barriers; b) a weak economic structure and a limitation of natural resources, which resulted in both the decrease of population and the number of towns; c) direct dependency on the status of the whole regional economy; d) a lack of central and powerful local authority that led to dependency on the power of the core at times of crisis, whereas otherwise the influence of the core areas was either absent or nominal; e) weak military capabilities which resulted in recurrent invasions from external powers as well as their limited influence beyond the local region; f) a lack of scholarly activities and hence a lack of legalistic religion/sects which was a result of all the aforementioned characteristics.

[8] It is difficult to strictly adhere to either category because both categories are generalised.

A number of historians, including Eric Wolf, Ferdinand Braudel and Janet Abu-Lughod, have observed that an 'international' economic phenomenon emerged in the thirteenth century. Abu-Lughod describes that the thirteenth-century system of international trade and the production associated with it was substantially more complex in organization, greater in volume and more sophisticated in execution than anything the world had previously known. This system linked a vast area that stretched between northwest Europe and China. Pathways between flanking trading partners met in the Persian Gulf ports and enhanced the system's importance.[9]

Abu-Lughod argues that the World-system of the thirteenth century did not consist of a single core power but rather of a number of coexisting 'core' powers. As a result of both conflictual and cooperative relations, these coexisting core powers became increasingly integrated over the course of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century. She writes that 'the Arabo-Persian imperial centres constituted one such core, which was surrounded by their semi-peripheries and was in contact with their peripheries through single-stranded reaches.'[10]

In the light of this analysis, Baḥrayn could be placed in a peripheral status during the eleventh and twelfth centuries in relation to the core powers of the Seljūqs in Iraq and Iran and the Fāṭimids in Egypt. On the one hand, during the thirteenth century the coastal cities of Baḥrayn, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, were peripheries or perhaps semi-peripheries in relation to, and subordinated to the core power located on the opposite shores of the Gulf. These were the Mongols and their vassals, such as the Salghūrids and later the kingdom of Hormuz, which dominated the Gulf economically, politically and militarily. These core powers exploited the most important raw material of Baḥrayn, the high-quality pearls which were located in the pearl fisheries near the shores of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. In addition, the powers exploited the two cities' locations on the Gulf which served in the trade network. On the other hand, the interior part of Baḥrayn which was under the nomadic ʿUqaylids during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was also a periphery or semi-periphery in relation to the core powers in the Mamlūks in Egypt and the Ilkhānids/Mongols in Iraq and Iran, who both employed the nomadic polity/sheikhdom to participate in the Mamlūk-Mongol War (1260–1323 CE). The ʿUqaylids also acted as

[9] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 8-10, 353.
[10] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 364-365.

conveyors of goods from the seaports of Baḥrayn, which were under Mongol vassals' control to Egypt, constituting an alternative overland route to the Mamlūks, linking the two core powers of the Near East.

The peoples of eastern Arabia and their polities, throughout most of Islamic history, held an antagonistic position toward the polities in Iraq. This antagonism was manifested in their adoption of alternative religio-political ideologies which ran counter to the core polities. Since the so-called second *fitna* during the Umayyad period, Baḥrayn was occupied by groups of the Khārijites (686–*c.*730 CE) and became politically independent from the Zubayrids in al-Ḥijāz and Iraq, and the Umayyads in Syria and Iraq.[11] Later, for most of the medieval period, Baḥrayn was home to dissidents who opposed the central authority, such as the Shīʿite leader of the Zanj movement (863–868 CE) and subsequently the Ismāʿīlī Qarāmiṭa (889–1077 CE). The same position was generally maintained under the ʿUyūnid emirs (1077–1236 CE) and the ʿUqaylids (1230s–*c.*1400 CE), who engaged in battles against armies from Iraq.

The peoples of Baḥrayn were divided in their living patterns into sedentary and nomadic groups, both predominantly formed as tribal societies. The sedentary people practised settled professions such as agriculture, trade, fishing, pearl diving, shipbuilding, handcrafting and so on. The nomads relied heavily on pastoralism, protection of trade and pilgrims' caravans, and raids. The nature of the relationship between these two groups varied from time to time and was subject to economic and political circumstances. At times, the sedentary and nomadic groups clashed, especially when the latter suffered drought in the desert and found the 'state' vulnerable. At other times, they cooperated and formed an interdependent relationship. An inverse relationship characterised the relationship between the nomadic groups and the sedentary polity. On one hand, when a polity becomes powerful it subjugates the nomadic groups; prevents them from raiding and plundering, incorporates them into the economic system by using them as auxiliary forces and as safeguards of trade and pilgrimage caravans. On the other hand, when the polity weakens the nomadic group's power increases and constitutes a rival to the polity's rulers.[12] This phenomenon will be observed when we discuss the ʿUyūnid emirate as well as their

[11] See ʿAbdulraḥmān al-ʿĀnī, *al-Baḥrayn fī Ṣadr al-Islām* (Beirut: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Mawsūʿāt, 2000); Faisal Alwazzan, 'Religion and Political Loyalty in the Region of Baḥrayn in Late Antiquity and Early Islam' (Masters Diss., The University of Edinburgh, 2011)

[12] ʿAlī al-Wardī, *Dirāsa fī Ṭabīʿat al-Mujtamaʿ al-ʿIrāqī* (Baghdād: Maṭbaʿat al-ʿĀnī, 1965), 13-14.

successors, the ʿUqaylids. Another evident phenomenon in this region was the heavy dependency on the policy of forming alliance relationships. This was an essential means for all political players in the region and was practised in almost every political and military confrontation, not only between local powers but also, at times, with outside powers.

The broader historical context of the period *c*.1050–*c*.1400 CE witnessed the fall of the Būyids in Iraq and western Iran and the rise of the Seljūqs and the Turkmen tribes of Central Asia in the Būyids' place in 1050s CE. This coincided with the collapse of the Qarāmiṭa in the region of Baḥrayn at the hands of local dynasties. At around the same time, the Fāṭimids in 1073 CE introduced a maritime policy to divert the trade routes from the Gulf to the Red Sea in order to gain economic strength to finance their war against their foes, the Seljūqs and Crusaders. This contributed to the decline of the economy of the Gulf area including eastern Arabia, which in particular has long been suffering economic decline since the foundation of al-Baṣra.[13] Later, maritime activities were gradually restored by the Iranian-based polities of the Gulf beginning from the 1100s CE which eventually occupied Baḥraynī seaports in the 1230s.

By the 1260s CE, the Mongol Ilkhānids and the Mamlūks formed the two great powers in the Near East. The first polity ruled Iran and Iraq and the second ruled Egypt and parts of Syria. The Mongol-Mamlūk War influenced the inner parts of the region of Baḥrayn and shaped its politics and economy. Meanwhile, minor polities emerged in the Gulf, such as the Qayṣarids of the island of Kīsh, the Salghūrid Atābegs in Fārs, the Ṭībid dynasty and the Kingdom of Hormuz. They successively dominated the politics and economy of the Gulf and the seaports of eastern Arabia came under their successive rule from 1230s to later than 1400 CE.

2. Importance of the research.

What makes the region and its study after the collapse of the Qarāmiṭa important is that the local people of the region, for the first time, formed their own polities and replaced the previous polities which mainly came from outside influences as noted ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris.[14] The ʿUyūnid emirate (1077–1236 CE) was independent from, yet not in opposition to the Caliphates

[13] See Chapter One.

[14] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn (466/1073-636/1238)* (al-Riyāḍ: Iṣdārāt Dārat al-Malik ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 2001), 199.

in Baghdād and Cairo. It was not based on ideology as the Qarāmiṭa seem to have been. This self-rule resulted in their independence in shaping their own politics and traditions that suited their physical and human geography within a sedentary-nomadic framework. The historical role of the ʿUyūnid emirate is pivotal for the subsequent polities of the region. It established a line of eastern Arabian polities. It provided an early example that would be followed or emulated by later emirates in the region until recent times, which had lots of socio-political practices in common such as: the issue of succession to the throne; power distribution among the ruling family, leaders of tribes, and society's elite; internal and external alliance politics; the balancing of power between the emirs, Bedouins and merchants; political marriages between the emirs and the tribes; army formation; political groupings and contestation within the branches of the ruling family over power and land ownership.

The post-Qarmāṭian period has not been studied in detail by Western scholars, as discussed in the literature review. This study contributes, for the first time, to the field of Islamic history a lengthy analytical study of eastern Arabia from *c*. 1050 CE to *c*. 1400 CE in English. In addition, Arabic studies did not rely on much archaeological and written evidence, many of which have been recently made available, as discussed in the discussion of sources below. This resulted in their limited ability to pose questions, describe and analyse events. Hence, this research attempts to surpass and update the current body of secondary literature.

Because it takes a World-systems approach to thinking about the history of Baḥrayn, this thesis addresses both the place of Baḥrayn in the wider world and its economic status. In terms of the wider context of Islamic medieval history, it should be noted that during this period Baḥrayn was occupied by and attached to polities based in Iran for the first time in Islamic history. With regard to the economy, eastern Arabia throughout its long history passed through phases of economic boom and decline.[15] This thesis will describe the status of economy during the period *c*.1050–*c*.1400 CE and will challenge the view held by some Arab historians who paid little attention to the broader economic context of the Near East and to the fluctuation of the Baḥraynī economy, assuming that Baḥraynī economy has been always thriving. They also appear to have been unaware of the studies done by archaeologists, which contrast their perception.

[15] See Robert Hoyland, *Arabs and Arabia: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* (London: Routledge, 2001), 13-33.

The question of religion and doctrinal beliefs in Baḥrayn in this specific period has been obscure due to the scarcity of sources on one hand, and on the other, to the involvement of current political rivalries and sectarianism in the Gulf States including Iran when dealing with this question. Therefore, this study will try to avoid these tensions and study the question objectively and academically. It does this by including all of the extant evidence which point to the co-existence of different 'sects' in the region as well as offering a much more historically contextualised understanding of religion. It shows how religion in Baḥrayn in the context of its peripherality and weak economy and authority was mainly folkloric and not very similar to religion practiced in major cities in the core areas, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Egypt and also to the modern religion in the Gulf States which is more legalistic in character.

3. Literature Review.

There is not a single book in a Western language that covers the history of post-Qarmāṭian Baḥrayn *c*.1050–*c*.1400 CE. The ʿUyūnid dynasty and emirate was not even included in the chronological and genealogical manuals of Islamic dynasties made by Western scholars, such as Zambaur and Bosworth.[16] Hence, no argument has been made to describe the whole region in that phase of history. Rather, there are separate studies on some of the themes of this thesis. Only short entries have been written in encyclopaedias on the dynasties of the ʿUyūnids and the ʿUṣfūrids by Rentz and Mulligan, G. R. Smith, W. Madelung and al-Naboodah.[17] In addition, there are studies on the poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī and his collection of poetry and its commentary. This source, which is entitled *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, has not yet been included in the modern historiographical studies as a historical source although it contains an immense quantity of historical information as we will see below. On the other hand, historical studies in Arabic are relatively abundant.

[16] Eduard von Zambaur, *Manuel de Généalogie et de Chronologie pour l'Histoire de l'Islam* (Bab Pyrmont: H. Lafaire, 1955); Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties: A Chronological and Genealogical Manual* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996).

[17] See Rentz and Mulligan, 'al-Baḥrayn', *EI*^{2}; G.R. Smith, ''Uṣfūrids', *EI*^{2}; W. Madelung, 'Karmati', *EI*^{2}; Hasan al-Naboodah, 'Bahrain' in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Josef Meri (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2006), vol.1, 95.

The first Western scholar to discover and use the manuscript of the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* as a historical source for the end of the Qarāmiṭa was M. J. de Goeje (1836-1909) in his article 'La Fin de l'Empire des Carmathes du Bahrain' (1895). He confirmed that the *dīwān* is a trustworthy and accurate source for the history of the Qarāmiṭa and the revolts of three local families and presented the narrative of the emirates of Āl al-Zajjāj and Āl ʿAbbās.[18] Another 80 years would pass until a second Western study was published on the *dīwān*'s manuscript. This was an edition of the collection of poetry and a critical study (in English) by Salah Niazi as a PhD thesis at the School of Oriental and African Studies in 1975.[19] A year later, this was followed by Khulusi's article on the biography of the poet and the *Sharḥ dīwān*'s importance to scholarship in the 'Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies conference'. In this article, the author emphasised the significance of the source as it provides abundant information on a variety of subjects, including language, history, geography and even anthropology.[20] In the same year Hans-Jürgen Philipp wrote a general history of al-Aḥsāʾ which included little on the ʿUyūnids and the ʿUqaylids.[21] However, none of these studies dealt with the ʿUyūnid emirate in detail.

Regarding the question of religion in Baḥrayn, Juan Cole (1987) was the first to discuss this subject. He argued that the Bedouin Ismāʿīlī rulers' appointments of Twelver judges resulted in the conversion of Baḥrayn's Ismāʿīlī people to Twelverism.[22] Ali al-Oraibi's PhD thesis at McGill University (1992) focused on the philosophical and Sufi aspects of the scholars who were attributed to the region of Baḥrayn and lived in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He argued that these Baḥraynī scholars were among the earliest Twelver scholars to have introduced

[18] M. J. de Goeje, 'La Fin de l'Empire des Carmathes du Bahrain,' *Journal Asiatique* 5 (1895): 5-30.
[19] Salah Niazi, 'An Edition of the Dīwan of Ali ibn al-Muqarrab and a critical Study' (PhD diss., School of Oriental and African Studies, 1975)
[20] Safa Khulusi, 'A Thirteenth Century Poet from Bahrain,' *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 6 (1976): 91-102.
[21] Hans-Jürgen Philipp, *Geschichte und Entwicklung der Oase al-Hasa (Saudi-Arabien)* (Saarbrücken: Breitenbach, 1976), 46-55.
[22] Juan Cole, 'Rival Empires of Trade and Imamī Shiʿism in Eastern Arabia 1300-1800,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19/2 (1987): 177-204. Republished in Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 31-57.

philosophy and Sufism to the Twelver body of literature.[23] These arguments will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

In Arabic and Persian, a good number of writings have been published. However, they present a non-analytical general narrative of Baḥrayn *c*.1050–*c*.1400 CE. The dominant questions in these studies were about whether the Gulf is Persian or Arabian; and later, whether the people of east Arabia were Sunnis or Shīʿites. These questions would seem to have been driven by the ideological context of Arab states and Iran during certain periods. For example, in the 1950s–70s, Pan-Arabism (*al-qawmiyya al-ʿarabiyya*) and Baʿthism (*al-baʿth al-ʿarabī*) were contesting the Iranian nationalism *millī garāye Irānī* and Pan-Iranism *Pānīrānism*. In the 1980s; after the Iranian revolution in which Shīʿite clerics assumed power, through to recent times, sectarianism between Shīʿism and Sunnism intensified and became the new ideological tool in the conflict, which negatively affected the scholarship.[24]

The Iranian historian ʿAbbās Iqbāl Ashtiyānī perhaps began the Gulf identity debate with Arab historians when he wrote a book in 1949 at the request of the Iranian Foreign Affairs ministry to show the historical bases that Iran could use to claim the sovereignty of the islands and the coastal areas of the whole Gulf, especially the western part. In doing so, Ashtiyānī cited the sporadic periods during which the polities established in Iran by different peoples, including the Daylamites (Būyids), the Turkmen (Seljūqs and Atābegs), the Mongols and the Hormuzians, have occupied the islands and seaports of the Gulf from their bases in Iran. He concluded that Iran possess the historical right to rule the whole region of the Gulf.[25]

Perhaps the earliest academic response was Qadrī Qalʿajī's book, a*l-Khalīj al-ʿArabī* (1965), in which he opposed the conventional name of the Gulf, suggesting that its identity was Arab and should thus be named the 'Arabian Gulf' instead. He stated that during Alexander the Great's conquest of the East, his admiral Nearchus (*c*.360–300 BC) was perhaps the first to describe the Gulf as Persian during his maritime voyage in the eastern Persian shores and was unaware of the Arabs in the western shores. He also quoted the ancient Roman geographer Pliny

[23] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Shīʿī Renaissance: A Case Study of the Theosophical School of Bahrain in the 7th/13th Century' (PhD diss., McGill University, 1992).
[24] This thesis will use the name 'the Gulf' because it is neutral.
[25] ʿAbbās Iqbāl Ashtiyānī, *Muṭālaʿātī dar bāb Baḥrayn wa-Jazāyir wa-Sawāḥil Khalīj Fārs* (Tehrān: Intishārāt Asāṭīr, 1384 P.H. [2005], reprint of 1328 P.H. [1949]), i, 14-145.

(77–79 CE), the modern Danish-German geographer Niebuhr (d.1831 CE) and the English traveller Owen (d.2011 CE), who had all named the Gulf the 'Arabian Gulf.'[26] Later, many writings repeated the same questions and arguments put forth by of Qalʿajī, such as Muḥammad Irshayd al-ʿUqaylī (1993) and ʿUmar Fawzī (2000 CE).[27] The latter emphasised the Arab historic presence in the Gulf including the Iranian shores, advocating that the Arabs constituted a single cultural unit despite being sporadically ruled by Iranian polities.

Apart from studies that were interested in the question of the Gulf's identity, there are a few specialised Arabic studies that concentrated on the post-Qarmāṭian period. Although some studies focused on certain aspects of ʿUyūnid history, they share the same descriptive approach with no substantial differences in their overview. For example, Muḥammad Āl ʿAbdulqādir wrote the first modern account of the ʿUyūnid emirate in his general book about the city of al-Aḥsāʾ, *Tuḥfat al-mustafīd bi-tārīkh al-Aḥsāʾ fiʾl-qadīm wa-l-jadīd* (1960).[28] ʿAlī al-Khuḍayrī (1981) wrote a biography and analysed the poetry of ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī, which also included some of the ʿUyūnid history. ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris (1984 as a PhD thesis, then published in 2001) was the first to divide the ʿUyūnid history into four periods/phases; formation and power, political fragmentation, recovery and reunification, and decline and fall. This division was accepted and used for most of the studies that followed, including this thesis. Al-Mudayris also wrote sketches on the administrative system, trade activities and scholarly output during the time of the emirate. He concluded that the ʿUyūnid dynasty was the first Baḥraynī dynasty in Islamic history to rule Baḥrayn independently, yet maintained a partial political alliance with the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate. He linked the periods of power to their strong relationship with the ʿAbbāsids, and the periods of weakness to the absence of this relationship. Faḍl al-ʿAmmārī (1413/1992), who relied on the poetry more than the commentary to write the history of the ʿUyūnid emirate, devoted a section to the poet's doctrine and concluded that he was a Shīʿite. ʿImrān al-ʿImrān (1993) dealt mainly with Ibn al-Muqarrab's biography and the aesthetics of his poetry. ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mullā (2002) presented a great deal of detailed information on the geography, civil settlements and economy of Baḥrayn before discussing the political history of

[26] Qadrī Qalʿajī, *al-Khalīj al-ʿArabī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1965), 7-24.
[27] Muḥammad Irshayd al-ʿUqaylī, *al-Khalīj al-ʿArabī fiʾl-ʿUṣūr al-Islāmiyya mundhu Fajr al-Islām ḥatta Maṭlaʿ al-ʿUṣūr al-Ḥadītha* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 1993); Fārūq ʿUmar Fawzī, *al-Waṣīt fī Tarīkh al-Khalīj al-ʿArabī fī al-ʿAṣr al-Waṣīṭ* (ʿAmmān: Dār al-Shurūq, 2000).
[28] Muḥammad al-Aḥsāʾī, *Tuḥfat al-Mustafīd bi-Tārīkh al-Aḥsāʾ fiʾl-Qadīm wa-l-Jadīd*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir (al-Riyāḍ: Matābiʿ al-Riyāḍ, 1960).

the ʿUyūnids. Muḥammad Khalīl (2006) wrote the longest non-analytical account of the political history of medieval Baḥrayn between the fall of the Qarāmiṭa and the advent of the Portuguese.[29] These studies present arguments on a number of questions, such as the nature of the Turkmen support in overcoming the Qarāmiṭa and their later attempts to invade the region, the nature of the political relationship with the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate, the religion or doctrine of the ʿUyūnids and the poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab.[30] Fahad al-Ḥusain (2006) avoided general accounts and concentrated on the agricultural activities during the ʿUyūnid emirate in his article. He relied on both archaeology and the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* to study the questions of watering system, water resources, products, peasants and landlords.[31]

The most detailed academic study on the ʿUqaylid/ʿUṣfūrid emirate was written in Arabic by ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān titled *Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn wa-dawruha al-siyāsī fī tārīkh sharq al-jazīra al-ʿArabiyya* (1979). He constructed the history of Baḥrayn during the period 1230s-*c*.1400 from a large number of small items of fragmented information found in many primary sources. Al-Ḥumaydān contextualised the history of Baḥrayn with the Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War of 1260–1323 CE and highlighted the role of the ʿUqaylid tribe in that war. He also focused on the Iranian-based polities' rule of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. He identified the nomadic dynasty that ruled Baḥrayn as the ʿUṣfūrid. He argued that the main reason behind the collapse of the ʿUyūnids was their failure to protect the region from both the nomads and the Kīshid maritime invasions, and from losing Baḥraynī lands and commercial seaports to the Kīshids. This led the merchants and other figures of Baḥrayn to seek another local power that could offer them better security for their trade and property. The merchants dethroned the ʿUyūnid emir in al-Aḥsāʾ and paid allegiance to the chief of the ʿUṣfūrid/ʿUqaylid tribe, ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid.[32]

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[29] ʿAlī al-Khuḍayrī, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh* (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-Risāla, 1981); ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn (466/1073-636/1238)* (al-Riyāḍ: Iṣdārāt Dārat al-Malik ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 2001); Faḍl al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya* (al-Riyāḍ: Maktabat al-Tawba, 1413[1992]); ʿImrān al-ʿImrān, *Ibn Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh* (n.p.: n.p., 1414[1993]).

[30] Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 114-115, n.4; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 78; ʿAbdulraḥmān, al-Mullā, *Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya fī Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya* (Kuwait: Muʾasasat ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Suʿūd al-Bābṭain liʾl-Ibdāʿ al-Shiʿrī, 2002).

[31] Fahad al-Ḥusain, 'al-Nashāṭ al-Zirāʿī fī Iqlīm al-Baḥrayn khilāl ʿAṣr al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya: Ruʾya Ithnographiyya' in *Mudāwalāt al-Liqāʾ al-ʿIlmī al-Sanawī al-Sābiʿ li-Jamʿiyyat al-Tārīkh wa-l-Āthār bi-Duwal Majlis al-Taʿāwun li-Duwal al-Khalīj al-ʿArabiyya* (al-Manāma, 2006), 337-387.

[32] The article has been published in three journals. I will use the latest one. ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn wa-Dawruha al-Siyāsī fī Tārīkh Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya,' a*l-Watheekah* 3, 2 (1982): 26-74. It was

4. Structure, Questions and Objectives of the Research.

This thesis is structured as follows. Chapter One deals with the historical geography and economy of the region of Baḥrayn. It highlights the economic fluctuations of the Gulf throughout the period *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE, using studies of extant archaeological evidence as well as contextualising it with the broader economic context of the Near East. The argument made in this chapter differs from previous works of some Arab historians, who relied on much earlier written sources that predated the eleventh century and described the Baḥraynī economy as prosperous and listed agricultural products of earlier periods. They perhaps assumed the continuation of the same economic condition and the same agricultural output. The chapter also examines the influence of Baḥrayn's geography on its societies, economy and politics.

Chapter Two presents an analytical narrative of the two short-lived emirates that toppled the Qarāmiṭa in Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf: the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj and the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās/Ayyāsh. This chapter discusses the political and economic factors that catalysed their revolts and interprets Abū al-Buhlūl al-Zajjāj's letter to the ʿAbbāsid caliphate and Āl ʿAbbās/Ayyāsh's contact with the Seljūqs.

Chapter Three discusses the rise of the ʿUyūnid emirate, which lasted for approximately 160 years (1077–1236 CE) and sheds light on four main themes. First, it explains the early steps taken by the founder of the ʿUyūnid emirate to topple the Qarāmiṭa in al-Aḥsāʾ; the formation of the military coalition, the six-year siege and the conquest of the city. Second, it offers a reinterpretation of the nature of the Turkmen campaigns in Baḥrayn which differs from the view recently advanced by scholars, including al-Mudayris, al-Janbī and Khalīl, that the Seljūq Sultan directed the campaigns. Instead, it is argued that these campaigns were waged by Turkmen military leaders to establish an autonomous polity relatively distant from the Great Seljūqs, who were not apparently interested in the region. Third, it questions the Fāṭimid relationship with the founder of the ʿUyūnid emirate, for which al-Mudayris and Khalīl and others have argued based on an alleged letter sent by the Fāṭimid Caliph to his vassal in Yemen, which praises ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī for his conquest of al-Aḥsāʾ. I am sceptical about the reliability of this piece of evidence, because the date provided in the letter predates the conquest of al-Aḥsāʾ. Fourth, the emirate's

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first published in *Majallat Kulliyat al-Ādāb, Jāmiʿat al-Baṣra* 15 (1979): 69-140; and later in *Majallat al-ʿArab* 15, 1/2 (1980): 65-115.

system of *dawāwīn* (rolls or public records), agricultural policy and the army formation are discussed in more detail.

Chapter Four focuses on the ʿUyūnid emirate's period of decline and fall. It discusses three main themes; First, the political division of the emirate and its transformation into two then three 'city-states'. Second, the uneasy relationship and struggle between the emirs and members of the ruling family, the Bedouins and the merchants are analysed. Third, it studies the fall of the emirate in Uwāl following the naval invasions waged by the Kīshids and the Salghūrids and the deposition of the ʿUyūnid emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf by the ʿUqaylids.

Chapter Five is divided into two sections. The first focuses on the Iranian-based polities that occupied and incorporated Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf in their trade network. These polities were the Salghūrid Atābegate of Fārs (1236-c.1270s CE), followed by the Mongols (1270s-1280s CE), Kingdom of Hormuz (c.1280s-1290s CE), the Ṭībids (1290s-1333 CE), and Kingdom of Hormuz (*c*.1335-1470s CE). The second section discusses the rise of ʿUṣfūrid/ʿUqaylid emirate, its sosio-political structures and system. This section also explains how and why the ʿUqaylids took part in the 'cold war' between the Mamlūks and the Mongols and how their good relationship with both Mamlūks and polities ruling Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf resulted in their transformation into professional caravan merchants.

Chapter Six concentrates on the history of literature in the region of Baḥrayn (*c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE). It describes the prose (the style of the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* and the letter of Abū al-Buhlūl) and presents the poets who lived during the ʿUyūnid and ʿUqaylid emirates. A number of poets were not presented in recent studies. Also, it analyses the relationship between the emirs and the poets.

Chapter Seven is dedicated to the question of religion in Baḥrayn. It uses newly discovered archaeological and written materials that assist in presenting a new interpretation of the religious history of Baḥrayn and its foreign rulers. Against the recent trend among historians that portrays the region as the home of a single doctrine, this chapter argues that Baḥrayn was home to co-existing communities of Shīʿī Ismāʿīlsm, Twelverism, Sunni Ḥanafism and Shāfiʿism, which seem to have been folkloric. The questions of how each doctrine found its way to the region and who represented them are also investigated.

Chapter Eight addresses the question of scholars and scholarship in Baḥrayn. It challenges the conventional wisdom which considers a number of Twelver scholars who lived during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and held the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī as Baḥraynīs. These scholars were Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Baḥrānī (twelfth century), Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baḥrānī (d.1208 CE), Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī (d.1270s CE), Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥusain al-Baḥrānī (lived *c*.1270 CE), ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (d.1274 CE), Faḍl ibn Jaʿfar al-Baḥrānī (d.1277 CE), Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī (d. *c*.1282 CE), and Aḥmad ibn al-Mutawwaj al-Baḥrānī (d.1417 CE). The chapter traces the development of the biographical reports on these scholars' places of birth, residence, movements, death and tombs. It contextualises the first appearance of reports that relate them to Baḥryan within the political environment, in which their biographers lived.

5. Sources: Archaeological and Written.

Although recent historians have unanimously agreed that the history of Baḥrayn *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE is extremely obscure, they have not taken into account all the available evidence. In fact, on the one hand, there is a growing amount of archaeological evidence. On the other hand, more literary evidence than what has been used also exists. Such discoveries improve our knowledge of the history of Baḥrayn and facilitate the interpretation of the history in that period.

The wide range of archaeological evidence includes: inscriptions, coins, architectural and infrastructural remains, seals and amulets, and pottery. First, inscriptions that belonged to the periods under the rule of the ʿUyūnids, the Mongol vassals, and the Hormuzians exist in the al-Khamīs Mosque area in the Kingdom of Bahrain. They provide valuable information about politics, administration, religious doctrines and aspects and condition of the country's economy. These inscriptions have been studied by Monik Kervran and Ludvik Kalus.[33] Second, several coins from different dynasties and rulers have been discovered in the Kingdom of Bahrain and al-Qaṭīf. Examples are coins used by the Qarāmiṭa, the ʿUyūnids, the Atābegs and the Mongols. These coins are useful in understanding the economic condition of Baḥrayn. Nāyif al-Sharʿān

[33] Monik Kervran, 'La mosquée al-Khamis à Bahrain: son Histoire et ses inscriptions. I. Le Monument,' *Archeologie Islamique 1*(1990): 7-51; Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain: Contribution a l'Histoire de Bahrain Entre Les XI^e ET XVII^e Siècles (V^e-XI^e De L' Hégire)* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1990).

(2002) discovered and examined coins related to the ʿUyūnid emirate. These coins provide evidence about its religious and political identity which was clearly Shīʿite. Al-Sharʿān asserts that the emirate was completely independent from the Caliphates of its time, the ʿAbbāsids and Fāṭimids. He also states that the ʿUyūnid emirs enjoyed a monarchical or sultanical style of rule, in terms of governmental form and political ritual.[34] In addition, Nicholas Lowick (1974) discovered and studied coins related to the Atābegs and Mongols in Uwāl.[35] Third, the archaeological sites of mosques and remnants of castles still stand in Uwāl (al-Khamīs Mosque) and in al-Aḥsāʾ (al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ). Analyses of their architecture and ground depths and levels suggested the period of construction and its different phases. The influence of foreign architecture is evident as concluded al-Husain (2001). In addition, several water wells and pipes still exist, which provide information about water supplies and the watering system. Fourth, several inscribed seals, amulets and prayer-stones from the fourteenth century have been discovered by Venetia Porter in the fortress of Bahrain.[36] These objects display symbols of Twelverism as well as information on the place of manufacture, that is, Mashhad in Iran. Fifth, a large number of fragments of Chinese pottery have been exhumed in the Kingdom of Bahrain at the fortress of Bahrain. They were also studied by Monik Kervran, who suggested the existence of a commercial relationship between Baḥrayn and China.[37] Sixth, a limestone of a construction text of a mosque in al-Qaṭīf which belongs to King Tahmatan II of Hormuz has been recently discovered, yet the town of al-Qaṭīf seems to lack archaeological surveys. Unfortunately, archaeological evidence that relates to the ʿUqaylids remains to be discovered.

The written sources on Baḥrayn over the centuries in question are few. There is only one local Baḥraynī source which provides information about the Āl al-Zajjāj, Āl ʿAbbās and the ʿUyūnid emirates. It also provides information about the early ʿUqaylids who later overthrew the ʿUyūnids and established an emirate. This source is divided into three parts: the poetry collection of ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī (1176-1230s/40s CE); a commentary on the poetry; and an

[34] See Nāyif al-Sharʿān, *Nuqūd al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn* (al-Riyāḍ: Markaz al-Malik Faiṣal li-ʾl-Buḥūth waʾl-Dirasāt al-Islāmiyyah, 2002).
[35] Nicholas Lowick, 'Trade Patterns on the Persian Gulf in the Light of Recent Coin Evidence,' in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles*, ed. Dickran Koumjian (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1974).
[36] Venetia Porter, 'Arabic Inscriptions from Qalʿat al-Bahrain Excavations,' in *Islamic Remains in Bahrain*, ed. K. Frifelt (Moesgaard: Jutland Archaeological Society, 2001), 201-207.
[37] See Monik Kervran, et al., *Ḥafriyyāt Qalʿat al-Baḥrayn (1977-1979)* (Bahrain: Wazārat al-Iʿlām, 1982), 69-82.

appendix, both of which were written by anonymous authors. This source is entitled *Sharḥ dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab*.[38]

The *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* is the main source for the history of the short-lived emirates of Āl al-Zajjāj in Uwāl and Āl ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf, which brought down the rule of the Qarāmiṭa in those cities. More importantly, it is the only detailed source of the history of the ʿUyūnid emirate. It describes the siege and conquest of al-Aḥsāʾ, the Turkmen campaigns, the Kīshid and Salghūrid naval raids, the internal conflicts among the emirs and the struggle with the Bedouins. It also provides a list of the ʿUyūnid emirs. It reveals insights into the economy, society and geography of the region at that period, as well as the internal affairs of the ʿUqaylids prior to their deposition of the ʿUyūnids. Nonetheless, this source seems to tell only one side of the story. Both the poet, who belonged to the ʿUyūnid family, and the anonymous commentator(s) appear biased against the Bedouins and against certain emirs who imprisoned Ibn al-Muqarrab and confiscated his properties. Furthermore, Ibn al-Muqarrab's most important poem was delivered in Iraq in which he recounted stories about the emirate's formative period, which he had not witnessed and perhaps exaggerated. Perhaps he intended the poem to demonstrate the glory of the emirate from which he came. The poet was a frequent visitor to Iraq, where he attended the courts of the Caliphs and Iraq's governors and met with prominent scholars.

The *Sharḥ dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab* not only presents linguistic aesthetics, but also contains information about Baḥraynī colloquial Arabic, as well as biographies, geography, phonology, genealogy and, most important for my research, history. The poet and the anonymous author of the commentary clearly intended to act as historians too. In many instances, they provide information on the ʿUyūnid emirs, Baḥraynī tribes, dates of events, names of battles, numbers of troops, political and economic treaties, written documents, such as letters sent by Baḥraynī rebels to the Caliphate and the Seljūqs in Baghdād, descriptions of important events and celebrations of military victories in many areas, including Baḥrayn, Najd, Oman, Baghdād, Mosul and Syria. The poet was an eyewitness to many of the events he described in his poems. The information on events in Baḥrayn that occurred before his and the

[38] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, ed. ʿAbdulkhāliq al-Janbī, ʿAlī al-Bayk and ʿAbdulghanī al-ʿIrfān (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī liʾl-Nashr waʾl-Tawzīʿ, 2003).

commentator's lifetimes was derived from unknown sources, perhaps lost books or local oral histories. The poet's role as historian could be compared, for example, to the roles of Farrukhī Sīstānī, a late tenth- and early eleventh-century court poet of the Ghaznavids, and Muʿizzī, a late eleventh- and early twelfth-century court poet of the Seljūqs.[39]

According to al-Janbī and the co-editors of the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, the oldest known manuscript of the *Sharḥ dīwān* is dated 901/1496, about 270 years after the poet's death; it was copied in Ḥaydarābād, India by Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ḥusainī al-Najafī. It contains 77 poems and pieces and 4143 verses. The poems in this manuscript are not organised alphabetically. It is located in the Berlin State Library under the call number 198. It contains some unique information regarding the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays, the ʿUyūnids and Baḥrayn which does not exist in later manuscripts.[40]

Al-Janbī suggests that there were two original versions of the *Sharḥ dīwān*. The first version was dictated by the poet Ibn al-Muqarrab himself to a transmitter or transmitters (*rāwī*, pl. *ruwāt)* in Iraq, from which the manuscript of Berlin was copied. The second original version was also dictated by Ibn al-Muqarrab, but in Baḥrayn and the oldest known copy of this version is dated 963/1556. It was made in Iran by Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Ḥasāwī. It contains 98 poems and pieces and 5104 verses. The poems are organised alphabetically. It is located in Kitābkhāne Markaz-e Ustān Quds Riḍawī in Mashhad, Iran under the call number 4833. This manuscript includes a very important appendix that lists the events and the emirs of the ʿUyūnid dynasty and it contains some information on the Qarāmiṭa, the Kīshids and the Salghūrids, as well as, information about the fall of the emirate in Uwāl. Strangely, these older manuscripts sometimes contain more information than the later ones do. This appendix does not exist in any other manuscript of the *Sharḥ dīwān*, except in a fragment of a biographical dictionary devoted to Shīʿite figures, which was written by a Shīʿite scholar who was probably a Twelver. According to Ḥamad al-Jāsir, the author of this manuscript was al-Ḥasan ibn Shadqam al-Ḥasanī (1535-1584 CE) and this piece is part of Ibn Shadqam's manuscript *Zahr al-riyāḍ wa-zulāl al-ḥiyāḍ*.[41]

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[39] Tetley wrote a study of these two latter poets and their works. See Gillies Tetley, *The Ghaznavid and Seljuq Turks: Poetry as a Source for Iranian History* (London: Routledge, 2009).

[40] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān ʿAlī Ibn Al-Muqarrab*, vol.3, 61-64.

[41] It is published by Ḥamad al-Jāsir in the appendix of Muḥammad al-Aḥsāʾī, *Tuḥfat al-Mustafīd bi-Tārīkh al-Aḥsāʾ fiʾl-Qadīm wa-l-Jadīd* (al-Riyāḍ: Maṭābiʿ al-Riyāḍ, 1960), 249-254; Ḥamad al-Jāsir, 'Ilā al-Ustādh al-Janbī: Ḥawla

Al-Janbī, in contrast, argues that Ibn Shadqam quoted the appendix from the 'Riḍawī manuscript' of the *Sharḥ dīwān*. Additionally, there is an early published book of the *Sharḥ dīwān*, printed in Bombay, India in 1893 CE; however, there is no indication of which manuscripts the editors used. It contains two poems and a few verses, which were not found in the available manuscripts that recent editors used to compile the *Sharḥ dīwān*.[42]

The Iraqi source, *Mirʾāt al-zamān fī tawārīkh al-aʿyān*, by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, who ended his chronicles at the year of his death, 654 A.H/1257 CE, provided brief information on the Baḥraynī emirates of Āl al-Zajjāj and Āl ʿAbbās. He derived his information from Ghars al-Niʿma (1025-1088 CE), who was an earlier source and through a traveller called Abū Ḥafṣ al-Rayḥānī.[43] The name of the founder of the ʿUyūnid emirate ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī was mentioned as a rebel who was besieging the Qarāmiṭa in al-Aḥsāʾ and who received support from the Turkmen military commander, Urtuq. It gives no information about the emirate of the ʿUyūnids. This abridged information of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī about Baḥrayn may reflect the view of the region's minor importance in the agendas of the Caliphate/viziers and the author's audience.

The book, *Tārīkh Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra*, is a Persian text by ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, known also as Vaṣṣāf, who was a fourteenth-century Persian historian and panegyric poet for the Mongol Ilkhānate. It includes brief information on the military campaign launched by the Salghūrid Atābeg Abū Bakr on the island of Uwāl in 633/1236. This campaign resulted in the defeat of the last ʿUyūnid emir, Muḥammad ibn Abī Mājid, and therefore the end of the ʿUyūnīd emirate on this island. It also provides information about the Salghūrid invasion of al-Qaṭīf in 1244 CE and the murder of the ʿUqaylid leader.[44]

If historians consider the era of the ʿUyūnids vague, the subsequent history is even more obscure. The scarcity of primary sources is the main problem in studying the ʿUqaylids and Baḥrayn during the period from 1230s to *c*.1400 CE. Unlike the previous emirate of the

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Dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab', *al-Jazīra*, 23th Rabīʿ al-Awwal, 1421 A.H. [27th June, 2000]. Accessed online: http://www.al-jazirah.com/2000/20000627/ar2.htm

[42] Al-Janbī and his colleagues provide full description of 19 manuscripts of the source. See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 56-119.

[43] Yūsuf Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Khinn and Kāmil al-Kharrāṭ (Dimashq: Dār al-Risāla al-ʿĀlamiyya, 2013), vol.19, 187-189; Suhayl Zakkār, ed., *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa fiʾl-Aḥsāʾ, al-Shām, al-ʿIrāq, al-Yaman* (Dimashq: al-Takwīn li-ʾl-Taʾlīf waʾl-Tarjama waʾl-Nashr, 2007).

[44] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Taḥrīr-e Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra*, ed. ʿAbdulmuḥammad Āyatī (Tehrān: Bunyād-e Farhange Īrān, 1346[1967]).

ʿUyūnids, who at least left a local source, *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, the ʿUqaylids did not have a single Baḥraynī source. Fortunately, the *Sharḥ dīwān* provides some information on the Bedouin leader Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra, his tribe, the Banū ʿUqayl of ʿĀmir ibn Saʿṣaʿa, and their role and influence on the ʿUyūnid emirate. However, the death of the poet Ibn al-Muqarrab coincided with the collapse of the ʿUyūnids; thus, we can no longer derive historical information about Baḥrayn from local sources. Furthermore, archaeological evidence related to the ʿUqaylids has not yet been discovered.

Hence, researchers of the ʿUqaylids and the region have to search in the sources of adjoining areas, especially the literature produced by historians of Mamlūk and Mongol polities, who were either contemporary or lived in close subsequent periods. The consequence of that dependence is that we will be able to know more about the ʿUqaylids' foreign relationships than their internal affairs, whereas regarding the ʿUyūnid history, the opposite applies. The *Sharḥ dīwān* provides a great deal of information on the internal affairs of the emirate, but very little about the foreign relations. Moreover, as has been shown earlier, the silence of the non-Baḥraynī sources—that is, Iraqi, Iranian and Egyptian sources—about the ʿUyūnids reflects the fact that it did not participate noticeably in 'international' politics, and Baḥrayn was not even among the concerns of the great powers of that time.

After the fall of Baghdād in 1258 CE, Cairo under the Mamlūk Sultanate (1260-1517 CE) overshadowed the ʿAbbāsid capital as an Arabic intellectual centre. Egyptian, and to some extent, Syrian historians assumed the same role played previously by Iraqi historians during the ʿAbbāsid era of writing about and interpreting the events that took place around them.[45] Therefore, the Mamlūk sources provide the majority of the brief stories and reports about the ʿUqaylids in Baḥrayn *c*.1250-*c*.1350. The reason for the Mamlūks' preoccupation with the ʿUqaylids was the latter's political, military and economic potential. The Mamlūks needed the assistance and cooperation of the ʿUqaylids in their war against the Mongols. Arabia was a strategic sphere for the Mamlūk Sultanate, which tried to communicate and form alliances with

[45] On Mamlūk Historiography, see Donald Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1970); Donald Little, *History and Historiography of the Mamlūks* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986); T. Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 182-231; Hugh Kennedy, ed., *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c.950-1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 23-167.

most of its tribes, especially in al-Ḥijāz, where the holy places were located.[46] The Mamlūks, by allying with the Arabian tribes, were able to control the pilgrimage caravans that came from Mongol territories and negotiate with the Mongols. Furthermore, the ʿUqaylids were additional overland suppliers of commodities to Egypt.

These Mamlūk sources are divided into several categories: chronicles, such as *al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar* by Abū al-Fidā (1273–1331 CE); *al-Sulūk fī maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk* by al-Maqrīzī (1364–1442 CE); genealogical books, such as *Nihāyat al-arab fī maʿrifat ansāb al-ʿarab* and *Qalāʾid al-jummān fiʾl-taʿrīf bi-qabāʾil ʿarab al-zamān* both by al-Qalqashandī (1355–1418 CE); geographical books, such as *Kitāb al-jughrāfyā* by Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī (1213–1286 CE); chancery manuals, such as *al-Taʿrīf fiʾl-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf* by Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī (1300–1348 CE), *Tathqīf al-taʿrīf* by Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh (d.1384 CE) and *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā* by al-Qalqashandī; and biographies, such as *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa-l-ʿuṣūr fī sīrat al-malik al-Manṣūr* by Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ʿAbdulẓāhir (d.1293).[47]

The Persian sources of the Mongol period which were composed mainly in central, south and south eastern Iran contain important but brief and scattered information about Baḥrayn.[48] *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* (1275 CE) was written by the famous Shāfiʿī jurist and Qurʾānic exegete, Qāḍī Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī (d.1286 or 1292 CE).[49] He was a judge in Shīrāz under the Salghūrids and Abaqā Khān as overlord. He wrote about the Salghūrid Atābegs and included brief information about the occupation of Baḥrayn and al-Qaṭīf. Another source is *Tārīkh Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra* by ʿAbdullāh al-Shīrāzī, known as Vaṣṣāf (d.1323 CE), who briefly mentioned the rule of the Salghūrids, the Mongols and the Ṭībids in Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. The historian and geographer Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī (1281-1349 CE) also mentioned the Salghūrid subjugation of the Gulf seaports, including Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. In addition, the books of *Majmaʿ*

[46] Donald Little, 'The History of Arabia during the Bahri Mamluk Period According to Three Mamluk Historians' in Donald Little, *History and Historiography of the Mamluks* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986), IV, 17-22.
[47] See the full citations in Chapter Five.
[48] Scholarship of Persian historiography in general is less advanced than the scholarship of Arabic historiography. On Persian historiography of the Mongols see John E. Wood, 'The Rise of Timurid historiography,' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46 (1987): 81-108; Charles Melville, ed., *Persian Historiography: A History of Persian Literature Vol. X* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 155-208; Andrew Peacock, *Mediaeval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy: Balʿami's Tarikhnamah* (London: Routledge, 2007); Charles Melville, 'Historiography, iv. Mongol Period', in *Encyclopædia Iranica*.
[49] See Charles Melville, 'From Adam to Abaqa: Qadi Baidawi's Rearrangement of History,' *Studia Iranica* 30 (2001): 67-83.

al-ansāb (1342–3 CE) by Shabānkāre (*c*.1343 CE), and *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh maʿīnī* (1413 CE) by Naṭnazī both supply information about the kingdom of Hormuz and its rule over the seaports of the Gulf, which encompassed Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. Later sources, such as Aḥmad Ghaffārī's (d.1565 CE) *Tārīkh-e jahān arā* (early Safavid period) and Munajjim Bāshī's, (Ottoman court official (d.1702 CE) *Jāmiʿ al-duwal* contribute details about the Baḥraynī cities occupied by the Iranian-based polities, which slightly differ from the earlier sources.[50] Furthermore, the lost book of *Shāhnāme* by Tūrān Shāh which included a history of the kingdom of Hormuz is preserved in the *Kings of Hormuz* by the Portuguese explorer Pedro Teixeira (d.1641 CE), who translated it from Persian into Portuguese. It was translated again into English by William Sinclair. This book contains details about Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

The geographic and travel books of Nāṣir Khusraw (d.1088 CE), al-Idrīsī (d.1166 CE), Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d.1229 CE), Ibn Mujāwir (d.1291 CE), Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d.1304 CE) and Marco Polo (d.1324 CE) contain information about the geography, religion, economic and the politics of the cities of the Gulf from the late eleventh to the early fourteenth centuries.[51]

Information about the poets of Baḥrayn, apart from ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab, is found in ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī's biographical dictionary *Kharīdat al-qaṣr wa-jarīdat al-ʿaṣr* and its supplement *Takmila* as well as in Ibn Ḥajar's *al-Durar al-kāmina*. Unfortunately, they provide little information and contain only fragments of their poetry. Nonetheless, these reports point to the nature of the relationships the poets held with the ʿUyūnid emirs. The source also records information about the movements of these poets to and from Baḥrayn.

There are few contemporary sources for religious scholarship and scholars who are considered to have been from Baḥrayn during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The scholars, who held the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī and were considered originally Baḥraynīs as their places of birth and death, produced a number of treatises and books. Many of these have been printed, but several are still in manuscript form. For example, scholarly treatises, letters and introductions of books, *ijāzāt* (diplomas), yield only little biographical information. These

[50] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn wa-Dawruha al-Siyāsī fī Tārīkh Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya,' a*l-Watheekah* 3, 2 (1982): 44 cites Aḥmad Ghaffārī, *Tārīkh-e Jahān Arā* (Tehrān: 1964), 126-7; Munajjim Bāshī, MS. *Jāmiʿ al-Duwal*, 646-7.

[51] See the references in Chapter One, Five and Seven.

sources amd their attribution to Baḥrayn will be discussed in Chapter Eight. One contemporary source provides a little information about Maytham al-Baḥrānī—Ibn al-Fuwaṭī's (d.1323 CE) *Muʿjam al-ādāb wa-Muʿjam al-alqāb*. The vast majority of the sources about these scholars were written centuries later.

Chapter One:

Historical Geography and Economy of the Region of Baḥrayn *c.*1050–*c.*1400 CE

1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the historical geography and economy of the region of Baḥrayn in the period from *c.*1050-*c.*1400 CE. During this period the emirates of the ʿUyūnids (1077-1230s CE) and the ʿUqaylids (1230s-*c.*1400) rose and declined, and a number of polities based in Iran occupied the seaports of the region from the 1230s CE. The chapter sets out four themes. First, it defines and demarcates the region of Baḥrayn as a geographical area and describes its towns, land relief, and climate. Second, it provides a general description of the region's natural resources and the main resources of Baḥrayn's economy which were pearling, agriculture, maritime trade, overland trade and pastoralism. Third, it suggests a re-evaluation of some recent historians' view of Baḥrayn's flourishing economy in this period. In doing so, the archaeological findings of numismatics and pottery are presented and used as a potential evidence for the economic situation. It also contextualises the region's local economy within the broader economic developments of the Near East in the period under study. Fourth, it explains and analyses the effect of Baḥrayn's geography on its society, politics, and economy; taking into account its relative isolation and remoteness in relation to the surrounding regions.

The chapter argues against the perception held by some historians, such as al-Misrī, al-Mudayris, Āl Thānī, al-Sharʿān, al-Mullā and al-Rashīdī that the economy of Baḥrayn was constantly prosperous in medieval periods. Through archaeological and written evidence, this chapter confirms and consolidates arguments that archaeologists, such as Whitehouse and Kennet have already posed about the region's economic decline. It seems that in the beginning of the period under question the region was in a severe decline, but later the region began to improve gradually, albeit only marginally.

The chapter also argues that this economic decline was a result of internal and external factors. The internal factors were the region's (a) physical and human geography and unaccommodating climate, (b) its damaged seaports and poor infrastructure because of the war

between rival Baḥraynī polities, (c) its polities' lack of interest in developing large-scale maritime trade in the Gulf, and (d) its polities' divisions and struggles. The external factors were: (a) the possible ʿAbbāsid commercial boycott on Baḥrayn which used to be the country of the notorious Qarāmiṭa, (b) the diversion of trade routes from the Gulf to the Red Sea which coincided with a climate change in Iran, and (c) the preponderance of Iranian seaports over eastern Arabian ones. The improvement of Baḥrayn's economy seems to have begun in 1050-60s CE after the Qarāmiṭa's demise as shows *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*. The new emirates, especially in Uwāl began to involve in the regional trade and to receive pearl merchants and divers from regional areas as pointed al-Idrīsī. However, the economic growth was not steady. It declined again because of the lack of central and powerful Baḥraynī authority which caused internal conflicts among the polities, the emirs and the nomads. Economic growth appears to have resumed in the 1230s when the Iranian-based polities under the Mongols, which restored the maritime trade from the Red Sea, occupied the seaports of Baḥrayn and integrated them into their trade network. The nomads of Baḥrayn also took part in the trade in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. They transported the goods that arrived in Baḥraynī seaports overland to Egypt under their allies, the Mamlūks, linking the two core powers of the Near East.

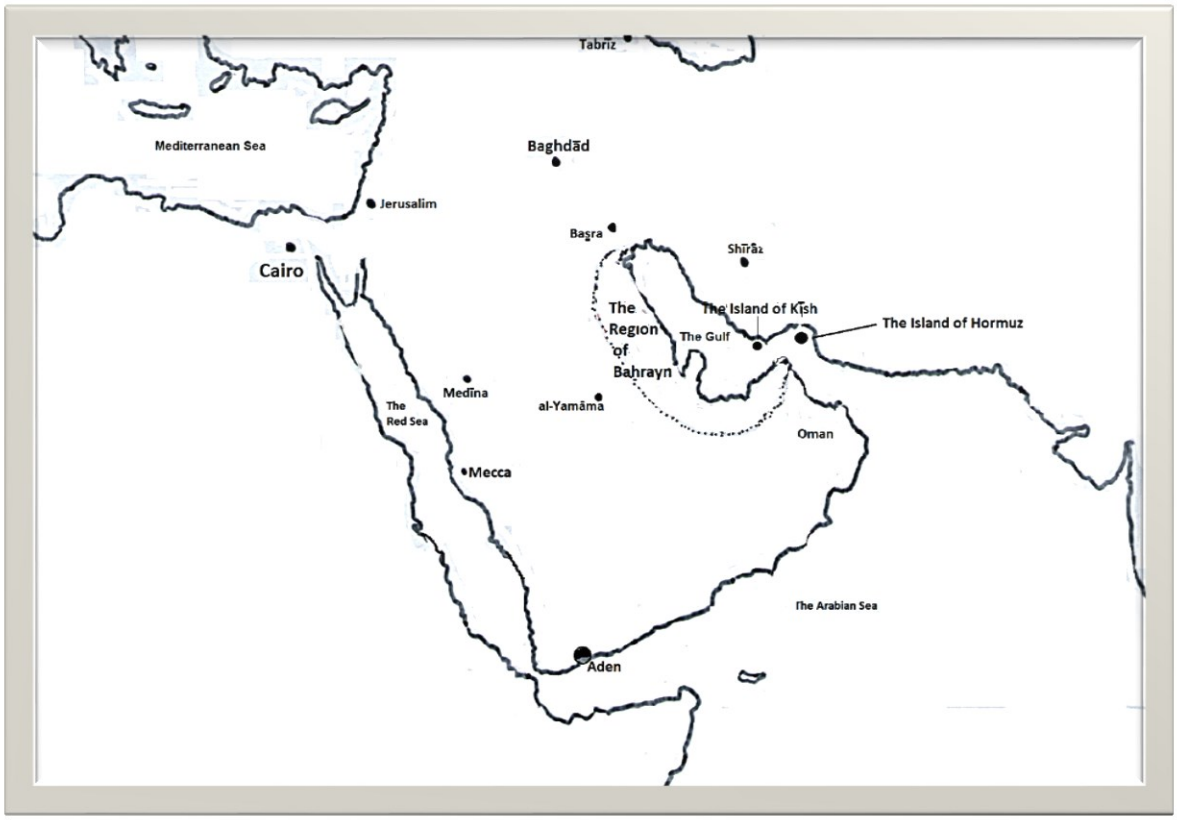

Figure 2: The geographical Location of the region of Baḥrayn.

2. Location, Land relief and Climate of the Region of Baḥrayn.

The historical region known to many Islamic geographers, including to al-Bakrī (d.1049 CE) and Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d.1229 CE) as *bilād al-Baḥrayn*, the region of Baḥrayn, was located in the area situated in eastern Arabia—extending between al-Baṣra in southern Iraq to Julfār/Jurfār (near Raʾs al-Khaima in the United Arab Emirates) in northern Oman, and from the western shores of the Gulf to the Dahnāʾ desert which separated Baḥrayn from Najd Plateau in central Arabia.[52] This area now includes: the State of Kuwait, the eastern province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the State of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The

[52] ʿAbdullāh al-Bakrī, *Muʿjam mā Istaʿjam min Asmāʾ al-Bilād wa-l-Mawāḍiʿ* (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1983), vol.1, 228; Abū al-Qāsim ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-Arḍ* (Beirut: Manshūrāt Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, 1992), 33; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), vol.1, 346-349; Zakariyya al-Qazwīnī, *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akhbār al-ʿIbād* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), 77-78.

people of this region, especially the nomads of thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were named by Mamlūk sources *ʿArab al-Baḥrayn*.[53]

Persian sources of the fourteenth century onward, in contrast, tend to give the name Baḥrayn exclusively to the island of Uwāl starting, perhaps, from Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī (d.1286 CE) in his *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* who was followed by ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī's *Tārīkh Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra* (1327 CE); then Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī's *Tārīkh guzīde* (1329 CE); then Shabānkāre's *Majmaʿ al-ansāb* (1333 CE) and Naṭnazī's *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* (1413 CE).[54] They distinguish Baḥrayn from al-Qaṭīf when writing about the military campaigns to subjugate them. The island has been named 'Baḥrayn' ever since until today's Kingdom of Bahrain. By the arrival of the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century, the name 'Baḥrayn' not Uwāl was already used and could be read in the Portuguese writings of Afonso de Albuquerque (c.1507 CE) and Pedro Teixeira (1590s CE).[55]

The land relief of Baḥrayn was divided into three types. The first division was the coastal plains which constituted the whole coastal area at a height of no more than 200 meters. The towns of al-Qaṭīf and al-ʿUqayr were the most important towns on this coastal area. It included numerous capes and peninsulas, such as the Qatar peninsula, Raʾs Tannūra, Raʾs al-Saffāniyya, Raʾs Mishʿāb, Raʾs al-Zūr, Raʾs al-Qulayʿa, Raʾs al-Arḍ and Raʾs ʿAjūza. The second division was the middle plains which were sloping from the west to the east. It occupied most of the region's area. They included sand dunes and deserts (such as, Mardāʿ Hajar, Nabūk, al-Dahnāʾ and Baynūna), hills (such as, al-Shabʿān, al-Qārra, Matāliʿ, al-Rummānatān, Bāb, al-Maqar and Uwāra) and valleys (such as, Wādī al-Sitār, Wādī Furūq, Wādī al-Shayṭān and Wādī al-Ṣummān). The desert of al-Dahnāʾ in the west separated the region from Najd, and the desert of Baynūna in the south separated Baḥrayn from Oman. The valley of al-Ṣummān by al-Dahnāʾ

[53] See for example, Aḥmad Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk fī Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyāda (Egypt [al-Qāhira]: n.p., 1941), vol.1, 214-215. Chapter five shows more examples when dealing with the ʿUqaylids.
[54] Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddith (Tehrān: Bunyād Mawqūfāt Doctor Afshār, 1282 [2003]), 123; ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Taḥrīr-e Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra*, 105; Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh Guzīde*, ed. ʿAbdulḥusain Navāʾī (Tehrān: Muʾasasat Intishārāt-e Amīr-e Kabīr), 506; Maʿīn al-Dīn Naṭnazī, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh Maʿīnī*, ed. Jean Aubin (Tehrān: Kitāb Furūshī Khayyām, 1336 [1957]), 12, 17; Muḥammad Shabankāre, *Majmaʿ al-Ansāb* in Jean Aubin, 'Les Princes D'Ormuz Du XIII AU XV Siecle,' *Journal Asiatique* 241 (1953): 129-136, at 133.
[55] Afonso de Albuquerque, *Al-Sijjil al-Kāmil li-Aʿmāl Afonso de Albuquerque*, trans. ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Shaykh (Abū Ẓabī, al-Majmaʿ al-Thaqāfī, 2000), vol.1, 184; William F. Sinclair, ed., *The Travels of Pedro Teixeira with his Kings of Harmuz and Extracts from his Kings of Persia* (London: The Hakluyt, prior to 1923), 26, 29, 173-177.

desert was a pasture for the nomads. It extended from the Empty Quarter in the south up to the Iraqi desert in the north; it was ca. 380 km long and ca. 80-225 km wide. The third division comprised the islands. The most important one was the island of Uwāl. Other islands, such as Sitra, Samāhīj, Tārūt, Shufār and Ḥawārayn were inhabited also.[56]

The climate of the region during medieval times is not described in detail by medieval sources except the general description of its hot weather in the summer and its dust storms.[57] Generally speaking, the current climate of the region, which is not entirely different from medieval times, is described as dry in the north and humid in the centre and south, especially the coastal area in the main towns, al-Qaṭīf, al-Aḥsāʾ and Uwāl. The temperature is very high in the summer which is the longest season (from May to September). It cools in the short winter (December and January). The region has a very low percentage of rainfall which might occur between October and April, especially in the north.[58] Drought was usual in Arabia and sometimes, if it occurred for a long time, it caused tribal movement and mass migration to other areas inside and outside the Arabian Peninsula.[59] A contemporary source vaguely indicated a famine in the region in 1159 CE.[60]

[56] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-ʿĀnī, *al-Baḥrayn fī Ṣadr al-Islām* (Beirut: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Mawsūʿāt, 2000), 21-37; William Facey, *The Story of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia* (London: Stacey International, 2000), 11-16.
[57] Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulub*, ed. G. Le Strange (Leiden: E. J. Brill Imprimerie Orientale, 1919), 136; Muḥammad ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharāʾib al-Amṣār wa-ʿajāʾib al-Asfār* (al-Maṭbaʿa al-Khayriyya, 1322[1904]), vol.1, 209-210; ʿAbdulraḥmān, al-Mullā, *Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya fī Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya* (Kuwait: Muʾasasat ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Suʿūd al-Bābṭain li-ʾl-Ibdāʿ al-Shiʿrī, 2002), 17-18.
[58] William Facey, *The Story of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia*, 18-19.
[59] On this subject see Fahad al-Ḥusain, 'al-Aḥwāl al-Manākhiyya wa-Atharuhā ʿlā Badū Shibh al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya khilāl al-Qarn al-Khāmis al-Hijrī: Taghrībat Banī Hilāl Unmūdhajan,' *Majallat Jāmiʿat al-Malik Suʿūd* 22/1 (2010): 67-84.
[60] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr*: *(Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-'Irāq)*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: Wazārat al-Iʿlām, 1973), vol.2, part.4, 683-684.

Figure 3: The main cities and oases of the region of Baḥrayn in eastern Arabia.

Figure 4: The main villages of the island of Uwāl.

There were a number of scattered towns/cities and villages in Baḥrayn, most of which are presently located in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia. The largest and most significant towns were al-Aḥsāʾ, al-Qaṭīf and Bilād al-Qadīm in Uwāl.

The town of al-Aḥsāʾ was near the city of Hajar. It became the capital town of the Qarāmiṭa in *c*. 900 CE, the ʿUyūnids and the ʿUqaylids. It was distant from the coast and famous for its agricultural products especially its dates.[61] The town of al-Aḥsāʾ, according to Fahad al-Husain, is now located in the village of al-Baṭṭāliyya. It boasts, among several less significant sites, the main mosque *al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ* and the Hill of the Castle of the emirate *tall qaṣr quraymiṭ*. The hill is called by the locals '*Qaṣr Quraymiṭ*', which means the castle of the Qarāmiṭa or Qurmuṭ, but the name has been changed into a diminutive form. It likely served as the ruling castle of the Qarāmiṭa and then the ʿUyūnids. Unfortunately, there are no extant remains of the castle. The Saudi government built a school in 1960 which occupied a large part of the site. Recent archaeological excavation revealed information about the time of urbanisation. Al-Ḥusain excavated the site and from analysis determined that it had six ground levels; the earliest level belonged to the seventh century at least, and the last belonged to the eleventh century. Locals told the archaeologist that while the authorities were upgrading the infrastructure of the village in 1984, they discovered some four meters underground a pipe made of pottery that linked a water spring to the hill. Al-Ḥusain also exhumed a similar pipe in the course of his excavation. He suggests that this may indicate the existence of a bath inside the castle. Indeed, the locals informed him that they had observed the remnants of a bath and that they believed it was the one in which a Qarmāṭian leader was killed. Al-Ḥusain observed the remnants of a circular hole (2 metres in diameter) in the ground, which he suggests to have been either a water well or a water tank. He also describes the remains of walls made of mud and a four-metre gate.[62]

To the south of the hill, traces of an ʿUyūnid mosque still exist. It has been argued that after the Qarāmiṭa's abandonment of religious practices, including praying, the ʿUyūnids built a number of new mosques and perhaps refurbished old ones.[63] The locations of many of these

[61] Aḥmad ibn al-Faqīh, *Mukhtaṣar Kitāb al-Buldān* (Leiden: Brill, 1885), 114.
[62] Fahad al-Ḥusain, *al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya bi-Qaryat al-Baṭṭāliyya* (al-Riyāḍ: Wazārat al-Maʿārif, 2001), 73-74.
[63] On the prohibition of praying in al-Aḥsāʾ see Nāṣir Khusraw, *Safarnāmeh*, 109-110; Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj*, 147.

mosques, which are mentioned in the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, are unknown – except for one mosque which is believed to be the primary mosque of the ʿUyūnids, *al-masjid al-jāmiʿ*. Al-Ḥusain studied the remains of the mosque located in the village of al-Baṭṭāliyya and concluded that it is the mosque that was built by the daughter of the founder of the emirate, Hiba bint ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, and that it was the central mosque of al-Aḥsāʾ (see figure 5). Based on the ground level and the architecture of the mosque, as well as fragments of pottery, al-Ḥusain confirms that the mosque was indeed built during the 5th - 6th A.H / 11th - 12th CE centuries. He explains that it resembled the architecture of mosques that were built at that time in regional cities in Iraq and Iran.[64]

The mosque is quadrate in shape. The length of the eastern side is 38.5 m, while the remaining sides are each 43 m in length. The space inside is comprised of a rectangular uncovered courtyard and a large hypostyle roof for the prayers supported by rectangular pillars. The mosque has two hollow *miḥrābs* (semi-circular niches in the wall of the mosque that face the direction of Makka) made of gypsum. The main *miḥrāb* is positioned in the middle, and the second smaller *miḥrāb* is located to the north of the former. They are adorned with inscribed floral ornaments.[65]

[64] Fahad al-Ḥusain, *al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya bi-Qaryat al-Baṭṭāliyya*, 60, 152.
[65] Fahad al-Ḥusain, et. al., *Āthār al-Manṭaqa al-Sharqiyya* (al-Riyāḍ: Wazārat al-Maʿārif, 1423[2003]), 135-6.

Figure 5: Al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ, the Main Mosque of al-Aḥsāʾ during the ʿUyūnid Emirate. © Fahad al-Ḥusain.

The layout of the historical town of al-Aḥsāʾ was also studied by Fahad al-Ḥusain. He explains that the town had two walls, interior and exterior, four gates, along with four districts, and four main roads, all of which led to the centre where the emirate's castle was situated.[66] The double-walled town was surrounded by gardens positioned very close to the exterior wall, and beyond these were larger farms, many of which are mentioned in the poetry of Ibn al-Muqarrab and its commentary. These farms were called *nakhl* (palms), which indicates their main products. Rich in wells and streams, they were homes to many landholding families including the ʿUyūnids, who originally came from al-ʿUyūn village in the north of al-Aḥsāʾ.[67]

The town's four districts were as follows: first, the eastern district, which was the oldest district. Second, al-Raḥlayn, which was considered the most important district for its association with administrative locations such as the *dawāwīn* (public records or rolls) of the army, the treasury and land grants, the primary mosque, the court and the military gathering point. Third, al-Thulaym in the north was inhabited by the famous poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab. The fourth part of the town was comprised of gardens; one of these gardens to the south was called Murgham.[68]

[66] Fahad al-Ḥusain, *al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya*, 184-185, 188-192.
[67] Fahad al-Ḥusain, *al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya*, 239.
[68] Fahad al-Ḥusain, *al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya*, 186-192.

Furthermore, two roads (*durūb* sing. *darb*) were mentioned in the poetry of Ibn al-Muqarrab: *darb* al-Janābidh in the east and *darb* al-Thulaym in the north. Al-Ḥusain suggests the existence of two other roads to the south and the west by making use of some accounts of battles mentioned in the commentary as indicators.[69]

Al-Qaṭīf was located northeast of al-Aḥsāʾ and about a mile from its seaport in Tārūt.[70] It was the capital of the Āl ʿAbbās emirate and later the capital of some ʿUyūnid emirs and an ʿUyūnid 'city-state'. Little is known about the layout of al-Qaṭīf. Al-Qalqashandī (d.1418 CE) appears to have derived his information from natives of al-Qaṭīf who described the city to him. He writes that al-Qaṭīf had both a trench and a wall with four gates. During high tide, when the sea rose, it reached the wall, with more ground visible when the tide was out. He adds that its area was larger than al-Aḥsāʾ, but had fewer palm trees.[71]

The island of Uwāl was the most famous in the region as described Yāqūt.[72] It witnessed the first revolt against the Qarāmiṭa by the Zajjājids.[73] Its archaeological remains are more than those in al-Qaṭīf and al-Aḥsāʾ. The oldest mosque known on the island of Uwāl is located in Bilād al-Qadīm, 3 miles from al-Manāma, and is called Masjid al-Khamīs, famous for its twin minarets (see figure 6). The mosque, along with the nearby cemetery, has attracted the attention of a number of archaeologists and historians. The most notable works were conducted by Ernst Diez (1914), who was perhaps the first to write about it academically; Belgrave (1957); Kervran (1990) and Kalus (1990), who both worked with the French archaeological mission; Whitehouse (2003) and Ḥusain Muḥammad Ḥusain (2010).[74]

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[69] Fahad al-Ḥusain, *al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya*, 184-186.
[70] Ismāʿīl Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Taqwīm al-Buldān* (Paris: A l'imprimerie Royale, 1840), 99.
[71] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshā fī Ṣināʿat al-Inshā*, ed. Yūsuf Ṭawīl (Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr, 1987), vol.5, 53-54.
[72] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.2, 432.
[73] See Chapter Two.
[74] Ernst Diez, 'Eine Schiitische Moschee-Ruine auf der Insel Bahrein,' dans *Jahrbuch der Asiatischen Kunst* II (1925): 101-105; James Belgrave, *Welcome to Bahrain*, 3rd edition (al-Manama: James Belgrave, 1957), 75, 83-86; Monik Kervran, 'La mosquée al-Khamis à Bahrain: son Histoire et ses inscriptions. I. Le Monument,' *Archeologie islamique 1*(1990): 7-51; Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain: Contribution a l'Histoire de Bahrain Entre Les XIe ET XVIIe Siècles (Ve-XIe De L' Hégire)* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1990); David Whitehouse, 'The al-Khamis Mosque on Bahrain: A Note on the First and Second Phases,' *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 14, 1 (2003): 95-102; Ḥusain Muḥammad Ḥusain, *Masjid al-Khamīs: al-Ḥawza al-Ūlā wa-Awwal Mismār fī Naʿsh al-Qarāmiṭa* (al-Manāma: Sharikat Dār al-Wasaṭ li-ʾl-Nashr waʾl-Tawzīʿ, 2010)

The mosque and its minarets are believed to have undergone three phases of construction. Nothing remains from that initial building except remnants of the wall of the *qibla* which featured a *miḥrāb* in the form of a niche (semi-circular, 0.70m wide, 0.35m wide) and a small part of a limewashed, ground floor. The remains of the wall's measures are: 0.5 m high, 8.75 m long, and 0.6 m thick.

Figure 6: Masjid al-Khamīs. © The Bahrain National Museum.

The dating of the initial construction of the mosque is controversial. The oldest date for the construction of this mosque, as suggested by Monik Kervran, goes back to the reign of the Umayyad Caliph ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (717-720 CE) or at least to the Umayyad period. She provides two reasons for her dating. First, she relies on a history book, *al-Tuḥfa al-nabhāniyya fī tārīkh al-jazīra al-ʿarabiyya* by Muḥammad ibn Khalīfa al-Nabhānī, who visited the island in 1914 CE and wrote that the mosque, the school beside it and the two minarets were built on the orders of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. Second, she writes that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was the first ruler to have introduced the niches in the *miḥrābs* of the mosques, of which one is featured in the wall of the *qibla*.[75] Whitehouse does not discuss the hypothesis that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was responsible for the construction; instead, he states that the style of the al-Khamīs mosque is similar to that of ninth-century smaller mosques found in Sīrāf on the opposite shore of the Gulf,

[75] Monik Kervran, 'La mosquée al-Khamis à Bahrain', 7, 35-6; Muḥammad ibn Khalīfa al-Nabhānī, *al-Tuḥfa al-Nabhāniyya fī Tārīkh al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-ʿUlūm, 1999), 32-33.

which were built a century after ʿUmar II. Ḥusain rejects al-Nabhānī and Kervran's hypothesis, describing it as a myth unsupported by historical evidence. He suggests that Abū al-Buhlūl, who revolted against the Qarāmiṭa in about 1058 CE, was responsible for the mosque's construction; he cites in support of his argument the story presented in *Sharḥ dīwān*.[76] Whitehouse believes that the second phase of the mosque's construction belongs to no later than the twelfth century.[77] The date of the third phase is known, because of its inscription, which names the ʿUyūnid emir Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl in 1124-5 CE. He expanded the mosque from 123m^2 to 632m^2, and built the western minaret. Later in 724 A.H. [1323 CE], a second minaret was constructed.[78]

Belgrave points out that when the Bahraini government was performing maintenance work on the site in 1950 CE they found two graves below the east wall which resembled those in the graveyard nearby, but which did not face Mecca as do Islamic graves. He suggests that the mosque was built on top of part of the ancient burial ground.[79]

3. Natural Resources and Main Economic Activities in Baḥrayn.

This section presents a general description of the natural resources and economic activities in the region of Baḥrayn. It presents archaeological evidence related to the period in question. The economy is contextualised within the political history of the Baḥraynī polities and Iranian-based polities that ruled Baḥrayn in the next chapters.

Deserts covered most of Baḥrayn, yet it possessed adequate water resources for small-scale agriculture. The region's oases and islands had springs, streams, wells, and marshes. For example, the valley of Sitār had many springs, including Tharmadā, Ḥanīdh[80], Niṭāʿ, Matāliʿ, al-Qāʿ and al-ʿUtayyid.[81] The springs of Muḥallim and ʿAyn al-Jarīb[82] were the two main springs in

[76] Ḥusain Muḥammad Ḥusain, *Masjid al-Khamīs*, 13, 22. See chapter two and seven in this thesis.
[77] David Whitehouse, 'The al-Khamis Mosque on Bahrain', 95-101, n.1.
[78] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 27.
[79] James Belgrave, *Welcome to Bahrain*, 84.
[80] Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.3, 187-188.
[81] al-Ḥasan al-Iṣfahānī, *Bilād al-ʿArab* (al-Riyāḍ: Manshūrāt Dār al-Yamāma li-ʾl-Baḥth waʾl-Tarjama waʾl-Nashr, 1968), 346-347.
[82] al-Ḥasan al-Hamdānī, *Ṣifat Jazīrat al-ʿArab*, ed. Muḥammad al-Akwaʿ al-Ḥawālī (Ṣanʿaʾ: Maktabat al-Irshād, 1990), 251; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān,* vol.4, 179-180.

Baḥrayn and have been widely celebrated in literature.[83] The streams of al-Ṣafā and al-Sarā/Sarī branched from the spring of Muḥallim.[84] The area's underground waters were situated near the surface of the land and were easily accessed by the inhabitants, especially in al-Qaṭīf, al-Aḥsāʾ, and on island of Uwāl. Some of these wells and springs, such as ʿAyn Abū Zaydān in Uwāl and ʿAyn al-Jawhariyya in al-Aḥsāʾ, still exist. According to William Facey, 'the natural groundwater which comes to the surface in [al-]Hasa and [al-]Qaṭīf originated in the distant past as rain falling in central Arabia. This rainfall seeps into underground water bearing strata of different depths and ages.' He adds that 'since these strata are titled slightly downwards towards the east, the water travels slowly, building up natural pressure and finds outlets in the rock, east of the Summan escarpment.'[85]

Agriculture was one of the most important economic activities in Baḥraynī towns and oases. During the early Islamic period the region produced dates, grapes, along with vegetables, fruits and grains. These crops were consumed locally and exported to other regions in Arabia and Persia.[86] Dates were the crucial product in Baḥrayn and were an essential dietary component for the people as reports Ibn Mujāwir (1233 CE).[87] These dates were of high quality and great variety and were inexpensive due to their abundance.[88] Other kinds of fruits, including mangos, bananas, citrons, pomegranates, figs and grapes, were produced, especially in Hajar/al-Aḥsāʾ and Uwāl. Cotton and henna were reportedly widely cultivated,[89] as well as barley and wheat.[90] These were the crops cultivated in early Islamic periods. We have no information on whether the region continued to cultivate most of them during the period *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE.

Though they neglected maritime affairs, the ʿUyūnid emirs paid special attention to agriculture and established an agricultural system. Fahad al-Ḥusain's pioneering and detailed study on this theme yields information on the ʿUyūnid agricultural system, farming methods, land-grant policies, and taxation. It also provides a list of farms owned by the ʿUyūnid emirate as

[83] Muḥammad al-Aḥsāʾī offers a list of springs in al-Aḥsāʾ see Muḥammad al-Aḥsāʾī, *Tuḥfat al-Mustafīd*, vol.1, 46-51.
[84] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān,* vol.3, 219.
[85] William Facey, *The Story of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia*, 16.
[86] ʿAbdullāh Jāsim Āl Thānī, *al-Ḥayāt al-Siyāsiyya wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyya fī Iqlīmay al-Baḥrayn wa-ʿUmān (al-Ḥādī ʿashar waʾl-Thālith ʿAshar al-Milādī)* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿUlūm al-ʿArabiyya, 2008), 188.
[87] Yūsuf ibn Mujāwir, *Tārīkh al-Mustabṣir*, ed. M. De Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1951-1954), 301.
[88] Nāṣir Khusraw, *Safarnāmeh* (Tehrān: Intishārāt-e Zavvār, 1335[1956]), 112.
[89] ʿAbdullāh al-Bakrī, *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2003), vol.1, 286.
[90] Muḥammad ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-Arḍ*, 33.

well as main water wells and streams and explains how farming was centred on the towns of al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf and north of the island of Uwāl. The areas surrounding these towns were called *sawād* (fertile lands). Al-Ḥusain's research reveals that the ʿUyūnid emirs invested in agriculture and expanded the agricultural areas to enlarge their ownership of property.[91] As rulers of a tribal society, the ʿUyūnid emirs in Baḥrayn needed to increase their wealth to meet the demands of tribal politics, such as gaining the loyalties of the ruling family, merchants and nomadic leaders.

According to al-Ḥusain, there were two types of agricultural lands. The first were called *al-basātīn* (gardens) and *al-nakhl* (palms) and were located inside the walls of the towns. The second were called *al-qarḥāʾ*. These were larger and located in the outskirts of the towns.[92] The main owners of the agricultural lands were: the emirate's treasury, the emirs, members of the ruling family, landlords/merchants, and later the Bedouin sheikhs of the ʿUqaylids and the kingdom of Kīsh.

There were also two types of land grants. The first was the temporary land grants for agricultural investment. These lands were granted by the ʿUyūnid emirs, as *iqṭaʿāt*, to whomever they wished for a temporary period, which expired upon death or expropriation. The temporary owner/tenant-in-chief was required to pay a certain amount of money or kind each year. These lands sometimes encompassed an entire village. The second type was the land grant for permanent ownership, which was also heritable.[93] Elsewhere, this kind of land grant was called *ṭuʿma*.[94]

4. Pearl Diving.

Pearl diving was an ancient profession practiced by the people who lived near the Gulf. During the period in question, it was one of the main activities, if not the main activity of the people of

[91] Fahad al-Husain, 'al-Nashāṭ al-Zirāʿī fī Iqlīm al-Baḥrayn khilāl ʿAṣr al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya: Ruʾya Ithnogrāphiyya' in *Mudāwalāt al-Liqāʾ al-ʿIlmī al-Sanawī al-Sābiʿ li-Jamʿiyyat al-Tārīkh wa-l-Āthār bi-Duwal Majlis al-Taʿāwun li-Duwal al-Khalīj al-ʿArabiyya* (al-Manāma: 2006), 341.
[92] Fahad al-Ḥusain, 'al-Nashāṭ al-Zirāʿī fī Iqlīm al-Baḥrayn', 342.
[93] Fahad al-Ḥusain, 'al-Nashāṭ al-Zirāʿī fī Iqlīm al-Baḥrayn', 357-368. See Chapter Three.
[94] Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London: Routledge, 2001), 85. See also on this subject Claude Cahen, 'Iktaʿ', *EI²*.

Uwāl and perhaps to a lesser extent in al-Qaṭīf.[95] Its revenues were an important financial resource for the Qarāmiṭa and the ʿUyūnids.[96] After the collapse of the ʿUyūnids in 1230s CE the polities on the Iranian shores took control over pearling in Uwāl.

The sea surrounding Uwāl contained a bank of pearls. The geographer al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī (d.1166 CE) wrote a detailed report about the craft and business of pearl fishing. He wrote that in Uwāl, where the inhabitants were considered masters of pearl fishing, merchants from many places in the world would visit the island with capital to invest. The merchants hired divers and paid them certain wages according to their experience and skills. August and September, when as many as 200 ships would sail in pursuit of pearling, were considered the best times for business.[97] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (14th century CE) wrote that divers and merchants from Baḥrayn (Uwāl), al-Qaṭīf and Persia would also take their ships out for pearl diving in April and May. The authorities taxed one-fifth of the takings.[98] Baḥraynī pearls were well reputed and internationally famous. One thirteenth-century Chinese source listed pearls among the products that were imported from countries, including Baḥrayn in the Gulf.[99]

5. Overland Trade and Pastoralism.

The region's desert landscape has coloured not only the social lives of many Baḥraynī people bestowing their tribal nature, but also their economic activities.[100] Caravan protection and pastoralism were the most significant features of the desert economy. Pastoralism was practiced in the region mainly by the tribes, most importantly the ʿUqaylids. Overland trade was practiced by both sedentary and nomads, but it was the nomads who were capable of protecting the transportation which constituted a source of power and advantage. This trade was sometimes

[95] For a detailed study on pearl fishing see Robert Carter, 'The History and Prehistory of Pearling in the Persian Gulf,' *Journal of the Economic & Social History of the Orient* 48, 2 (2005): 139-209.
[96] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān ibn al-Muqarrab*, vol.2, 992, 1292-1293.
[97] Muḥammad al-Idrīsī, *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī Ikhtirāq al-Āfāq* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfa al-Dīniyya, n.d.), vol.1, 387-391.
[98] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār*, vol.1, 209.
[99] Friedrich Hirth and W. W. Rockhill, tr., ed., *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century entitled Chu-fan-chi* (St. Petersburg: Printing Office of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1911), 117, 122, n.13.
[100] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn wa-Dawruhā al-Siyāsī fī Tārīkh Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya' *al-Watheekah* 3, 2 (1982): 28.

supervised by the urban authority in the main town of al-Aḥsāʾ under the Qarāmiṭa and later under the ʿUyūnids at their political and military peaks.

Unfortunately, information about overland trade during the ʿUyūnid emirate is scarce. However, as suggested *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, the ʿUyūnids during their political peaks had the military upper hand over the tribes in central and northern Arabia. An ʿUyūnid emir made a deal with the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīnallāh (r.1180-1225) to protect the routes that led to Mecca. This might suggest the presence of a level of stability, which facilitated overland trade. The largest Baḥraynī tribe, the ʿUqaylids, dominated the desert and used this advantage to bring down the ʿUyūnid emirate later. The ʿUqaylids' desert activities, including overland trade and caravan protection, shaped the politics and foreign relations of their emirate (1230s-1350s CE). The Mamlūk-ʿUqaylid political alliance against the Mongols boosted overland trade.[101] The ʿUqaylids eventually became merchants and began to convey goods (most importantly horses) from Baḥrayn to Egypt and India, making use of the new and flourishing horse business of the Ṭībids.[102] The Ṭībid family, which ruled Persia for their Mongol overlords, took control of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, where they began to breed horses.[103]

As in many other parts of the Arabian Peninsula, desert pastoralism was a fundamental economic resource in Baḥrayn. Our sole Baḥraynī source, *Sharḥ dīwān ibn al-Muqarrab*, provides information about contests between the ʿUyūnid emirs and the ʿUqaylids, who at times sought to use the oases and farms owned by the ʿUyūnids as pastures for their herds.[104] The valley of al-Ṣummān was perhaps the most important place for pastoralists.

6. **Maritime Trade.**

Information on maritime trade activities is also scarce. However, two commodities dominate the scattered pieces of information related to Baḥrayn's exports during the period under question. These commodities were pearls and horses. The pearls of Baḥrayn (i.e. Uwāl) reached as far as

[101] See Chapter Five.
[102] Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, ed. Kāmil al-Jubūrī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2010), vol.3, 55.
[103] See Chapter Five.
[104] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1011-1012.

China. In one Chinese source *Description of Barbarous People* by the inspector of the foreign trade Chau Jo Kua (1170–1228 CE), we find the name *Pai-lien* among a list of countries with whom China was doing business in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the Song Dynasty. The translators and editors of the book interpreted the name to mean Baḥrayn. Chau Jo Kua mentions pearls among the products they imported from the countries with which they dealt.[105] Indeed, several Chinese coins related to the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries were excavated from the island of Uwāl in 1977 by the French archaeological mission.[106] The pearls of Baḥrayn (Uwāl) were known for their quality and were the main exports of the island.[107] Horses were also bred in the region and were exported by sea to India and China and overland to Egypt by the ʿUqaylids.[108]

The seaport of Dārīn on the isle of Tārūt near al-Qaṭīf was an important seaport in late antiquity and early Islam. It is widely mentioned in classical poetry and is famous as a source of musk perfume.[109] Sources from the eleventh century onwards do not provide information about al-Qaṭīf, yet it was among the string of seaports that many Iranian-based polities occupied, suggesting the seaport continued its activity but without gaining any special fame.

Fragments of Chinese pottery were exhumed in the Castle of Baḥrayn, dated within an extensive period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Fifty percent of the pottery shards are Celadon, a kind of pottery made only in China. Twenty percent is white and blue pottery and twenty-two percent is a different kind of pottery painted in either green or brown. The remaining objects are pieces of rocks called 'ding' and white Chinese pottery.[110] These artefacts correspond with written evidence on commercial relations between the island of Uwāl and China.

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[105] Friedrich Hirth and W. W. Rockhill, trans. ed., *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century, entitled Chu-fan-chi* (St. Petersburg: Printing Office of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1911), 117, 122, n.13.
[106] See footnote 114.
[107] Ḥamdullāh Muswafī Qazwīnī, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulub*, 226.
[108] See Chapter Five.
[109] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.2, 432.
[110] For a full description of the pottery see Monik Kervran, et al, *Ḥafriyyāt Qalʿat al-Baḥrayn (1977-1979)*, 69-82.

Perhaps via maritime trade, essential construction materials, such as timber, iron and limestone, were imported because the region lacked these raw materials. Archaeological objects of goods made in Mashhad were also discovered in Uwāl.[111]

7. Archaeological Evidence: Numismatics and Pottery.

In general, the existence of coins in a historical city can give evidence of its past economic status. Gold and silver coins were internationally accepted exchange material and were minted by large and influential empires that had either gold or silver resources or other products to trade for these crucial minerals. Gold and silver coins functioned mainly as means to buy necessary products from countries overseas, and to establish and fund armies, police forces, judiciaries and to build infrastructural projects, such as castles, mosques, walls and roads. These metals also supported economic independence from other states' monetary systems and served as an expression of political and religious ideologies and had self-legitimisation purpose.[112] Coins made of less valuable materials, such as lead and copper, had very limited purchasing power. These metals were last in the value ranking and were used for the needs of the people's purchases for daily life, as was the case for Egyptians under the Mamlūks.[113]

Baḥrayn appears to have lacked gold and silver coins in the period *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE. Lead (sometimes mixed with copper or bronze) is the dominant coin material discovered in the region so far. This suggests that the economy was weaker than the economies of the adjoining areas. We cannot assume that gold and silver coins never existed in the area, because our Baḥraynī source speaks of dinars (gold coins) having been used in many circumstances, but they do not seem to have circulated widely in Baḥrayn *c*.1050-*c*.1400. Only three gold coins belonging to earlier periods (eight-tenth centuries) have been discovered.[114] This might suggests

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[111] Venetia Porter, 'Arabic Inscriptions from Qalʿat al-Bahrain Excavations,' in *Islamic Remains in Bahrain*, ed. K. Frifelt (Moesgard: Jutland Archaeological Society, 2001), 201-207.
[112] See Andrew Ehrenkreutz, 'Monetary Aspects of Medieval Near Eastern Economic History' in *Monetary Change and Economic History in the Medieval Muslim World*, ed. Jere L. Bacharach (Hampshire: Variorum, 1992), 38.
[113] Wan Kamal Mujani, 'The Fineness of Dinar, Dirham, and Fals during the Mamluk Period,' *Journal of Applied Sciences Research*, 7/12 (2011): 1897.
[114] The first was minted in 750-1 CE and belonged to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Saffāḥ (r.749-754 CE). The second belonged to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (r.786-809 CE) and the third minted in al-Manṣūriyya near al-Qayrawān (in Tunisia), belonged to the fifth Fāṭimid Caliph al-ʿAzīz Nizār (r.975-996CE). See Timothy Insoll, 'Three Gold Dinars from Bahrain', *Numismatic Chronicle*, vol.163 (2003): 395-8.

Baḥrayn's declining economy when we compare it with the eight-tenth centuries which had gold coins.

Some Qarmāṭian lead coins were exhumed in Uwāl by a Danish archaeological mission 1953-1965 CE. Other lead and copper coins were found on the island of Uwāl. Some belonged to the Salghūrid Atābegate, who ruled Uwāl between 1236-1282 CE, and the others belonged to the Mongol vassals who ruled Uwāl from *c*.1282-*c*.1335 CE.[115] There was also a recent discovery of ʿUyūnid coins made of lead mixed with copper or bronze.[116]

Twenty-three Chinese coins (copper and lead) were discovered in the Castle of Bahrain (in the Kingdom of Bahrain) by the Danish archaeological mission (1977-1978 CE). These coins related to the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries and belonged to the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties. They were dated between 1068 CE and 1225 CE.[117]

These finds of low-value coins correspond with evidence of poor economic conditions from written sources, such as Nāṣir Khusraw and *Sharḥ diwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*. The traveller Nāṣir Khusraw visited al-Aḥsāʾ in 1051 CE, during the late Qarmāṭian era. He reported that the people were using coins made of lead and only locally. He also reported that the leaders of the Qarāmiṭa were receiving half of Uwāl's production of pearls.[118] It is possible that they used pearls as a currency for exchanging vital and expensive goods and important services.

Even if the lead coins had no value outside the region, they certainly served some purpose. It can be assumed that the coins were meant to symbolise political independence and religious and political identity. The ʿUyūnid coins seem to project Shīʿite identity as well as independence from the ʿAbbāsid and Fāṭimid caliphates. They may have been tools for political legitimacy, especially at a time when a rivalry existed within the ʿUyūnid ruling family.[119]

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[115] Nicholas Lowick, 'Trade Patterns on the Persian Gulf', 321-329. These coins are preserved in the Forhistorik Museum, Aarhus, Denmark.
[116] See Nāyif al-Sharʿān, *Nuqūd al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn* (al-Riyāḍ: Markaz al-Malik Faiṣal li-ʾl-Buḥūth waʾl-Dirasāt al-Islāmiyyah, 2002). They will be discussed in chapter four.
[117] For a full description of these coins see Monik Kervran, et al, *Ḥafriyyāt Qalʿat al-Baḥrayn (1977-1979)*, 54-57.
[118] Nāṣir Khusraw, *Safarnāmeh,* 112.
[119] See Chapter Four.

8. The Impact of Baḥrayn's Geography on its Society, Politics and Economy.

The main towns of Baḥrayn in eastern Arabia, al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf, were surrounded on the North, West and South by deserts and on the East by the Gulf. This geographical position isolated them and made them nearly inaccessible to armies that came overland from Iraq. Because of its geographical relative remoteness, Baḥrayn used to be home to several oppositional and independent religious and political Islamic groups, such as the Khārijites (686–723 CE), the Zanj movement (863–868 CE), the Qarāmiṭa (899–1077 CE) and the ʿUyūnids (1077–1236 CE). The post-Qarmāṭian period was no different. The polities kept their political and religious autonomy and repelled several attempts at occupation by Iraqi-based troops.

It is worth noting that although al-Qaṭīf and the island of Uwāl were geographically part of the region of Baḥrayn, they became politically and administratively separated after the collapse of the ʿUyūnid emirate (1077–1236 CE). The ʿUqaylid polity in al-Aḥsāʾ (1230s–1350s CE) lost Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf to consecutive Iranian polities, beginning with the Salghūrids of Fārs and Kīsh (1236–1282 CE), the Mongols (1270s–1291 CE), their vassals the Ṭībids (1291–*c*.1335 CE) and the Kingdom of Hormuz (*c*.1335–1400 CE).[120] These polities considered the two Baḥraynī seaports crucial for their political and economic strategies.[121]

Recent Arab historians of medieval Baḥrayn have tended to overplay the region's economic richness and to ascribe to it a significant role in the global trade network, based on the importance of its location.[122] To some extent, this might be true of Uwāl, which was controlled by the polities of the eastern shore of the Gulf, but not of the inner part of eastern Arabia. It is true indeed that eastern Arabia was situated in a vitally strategic location and had the potential to play an influential role in regional trade and politics. However, whether the people and indigenous polities of Baḥrayn (the ʿUyūnids and ʿUqaylids) invested in that strategic location is

[120] Although without naming the ʿUqaylids, Mustawfī Qazwīnī points to that separation. See Ḥamdullāh Muswafī Qazwīnī, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulub*, 135.

[121] See Chapter Five. Uwāl returned, although briefly, to an eastern Arabian rule in the early sixteenth century, under the Jabrid. See G. Rentz, 'Djabrids', *EI*^{2}.

[122] See for example Ḥusain al-Misrī, *Tārīkh al-ʿAlāqāt al-Siyāsiyya wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyya baina al-Irāq wa-l-Khalīj al-ʿArabī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥadātha, 1982), 294-305; ʿAbdullāh Jāsim Āl Thānī, *al-Ḥayāt al-Siyāsiyya wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyya fī Iqlīmay al-Baḥrayn wa-ʿUmān*, 5; Nāyif al-Sharʿān, *Nuqūd al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn* (al-Riyāḍ: Markaz al-Malik Faiṣal li-ʾl-Buḥūth waʾl-Dirasāt al-Islāmiyyah, 2002), 23-25; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mullā, *Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya fī Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 73-75; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 165-170; Badir al-Rashīdī, *al-Khalīj wa-Āsyā fiʾl-ʿAlāqāt al-Tārīkhiyya* (Kuwait: Maktabat Āfāq, 2015), 30-34.

questionable. The *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī* shows that the ʿUyūnids were heavily preoccupied with internal affairs and local rivalries over power, which resulted in the abandonment of maritime projects. The ʿUyūnids experienced continuous naval invasions from the island of Kīsh. Yaqūt al-Ḥamawī writes in his dictionary that the king of Kīsh used to collect two thirds of Baḥrayn's income.[123] They eventually lost their seaports to the Iranian-based polities. The Baḥraynī polities seemingly did not take advantage of their strategic location on the Gulf, which enabled their counterparts to occupy and exploit the seaports of Baḥrayn, reducing them to the lowest rank of importance.

The Iranian seaports on the eastern shores of the Gulf were more active than the Baḥraynī seaports were and took the lion's share of trading activity. Not only written sources imply this gap, but it is also reflected in archaeological works which found more evidence in the Iranian seaports than Baḥraynī seaports. David Whitehouse states: 'In the period ca. AD 1000-1200 two ports, one after the other, dominated the sea lanes of the Gulf: Siraf and Kish.'[124] Aubin noted that even after the economy of the Gulf began to flourish in the thirteenth century, Arab sailors did not dominate the maritime trade.[125] Derek Kennet also explained from an archaeological perspective that Baḥrayn's economy was in decline from the eleventh to the mid-fourteenth century, while the economy of the Iranian coastal area was flourishing.[126]

Several factors and circumstances, both internal and external, contributed to the remoteness and political and economic marginalisation of the region.

Regarding the internal factors; first, a desert about 500 kilometres long separated the closest two cities, al-Qaṭīf in Baḥrayn and al-Baṣra in Iraq. In the medieval period, passengers on camels took usually fifteen days to travel between these two towns.[127] Along its 500 kilometres desert, there were almost no towns that could be used for the purpose of rest or logistics. Al-Idrīsī (d.1166 CE) described the route between al-Baṣra and Baḥrayn as rarely used by

[123] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.4, 422.
[124] See David Whitehouse, 'Maritime Trade in the Gulf: The 11th and 12th Centuries,' *World Archaeology: Islamic Archaeology* 14/3 (1983): 328-334.
[125] Jean Aubin, 'Y a-t-il eu interruption du commerce par mer entre le Golfe Persique et l'Inde du XIe au XIVe Siècle?' *Studia* 11 (1963): 165-171.
[126] Derek Kennet, 'An Outline Archaeological History of the Northern Emirates in the Islamic Period', in *Second International Conference on the Archaeology in the UAE. Abu Dhabi*, ed. D. Potts and P. Hellyer (Abū Dhabī Authority for Culture and Heritage: 2013), 196.
[127] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.1, 347.

merchants.[128] Hence, the desert to the north of Baḥrayn was a natural barrier between Baḥrayn and Iraq and constituted an obstacle that inhibited overland trade activities.

Second, the region's harsh, hot and long summer often made it extremely difficult for armies to succeed in conquering and subjugating it. Traditional armies could not sustain a long siege, and they could not maintain and protect their supply lines and stations because the Bedouins could easily cut them off. A good example is that despite their efforts, several Turkmen armies failed to occupy the region in 1070s CE.[129]

Third, Nomadism resulted from adaptation to the physical geography which significantly contributed to the shaping of the living patterns and characteristics of the majority of the region's inhabitants and enabled them to survive. The most obvious features of nomadism were the recurrent movements and migrations to places where they could find temporary sources of water for themselves and their herds. The limited water resources resulted in recurring conflicts and wars among the tribes and the sedentary polities that had settled in the few towns in the region. In addition, few trade caravans could survive a Bedouin attack. The lives and goods of these travellers were spared if they paid the Bedouins large sums of money for permission to enter their territory. However, the safety of these caravans was not guaranteed because they still might be attacked by another tribe. Indeed, as al-Idrīsī (d.1166 CE) described, the route between al-Baṣra and al-Qaṭīf was abandoned and rarely used by merchants, which might have been in consequence of that situation.[130]

Fourth, the underdeveloped infrastructure of Baḥrayn's seaports may have hindered the growth of the economy under the ʿUyūnids. The ancient Baḥraynī seaport of al-ʿUqayr was active until the 1050s.[131] However, in the war between the Qarāmiṭa and the rebels of Uwāl, the Uwālī leader Abū al-Buhlūl damaged the seaport. In his letter to the ʿAbbāsid caliph, Abū al-Buhlūl reported that he had damaged the seaport of al-ʿUqayr, which was used to link the Qarāmiṭa in al-Aḥsāʾ to the Gulf, which served as a route for importing goods. He explained that his objective was to weaken the Qarāmiṭa by preventing them from receiving essential

[128] Muḥammad al-Idrīsī, *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq*, vol.1, 391.
[129] See chapter Two and Three.
[130] Muḥammad al-Idrīsī, *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq*, vol.1, 391.
[131] William Facey, *The Story of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia*, 84.

supplies.[132] It seems that the ʿUyūnids did not rebuild it, and they might have not invested in maritime projects in general. The entry of al-ʿUqayr in Yāqūt's geographical dictionary about this seaport during the late ʿUyūnid emirate contains no updated information about al-ʿUqayr. Yāqūt described it as a sea village close to 'Hajar', the old name of al-Aḥsāʾ.[133] As understood from al-Idrīsī, al-Qaṭīf specialised in the production of palms and dates, whereas Uwāl specialised on pearling. It seems that because of internal conflicts among the ʿUyūnid emirs, they did not adopt a maritime trade strategy. Their neglect of building a fleet that would serve to expand both military and trading activities, made them prey to many naval raids by the Kīshids and the Salghūrids.[134] Maritime trade was probably left for individual Baḥraynī merchants to carry out without 'state patronage'.

Regarding the external factors; first, the origins of Baḥrayn's long-term economic decline may be dated back to the seventh century after the foundation al-Baṣra in 637 CE and its transformation as a thriving seaport. This new Iraqi seaport not only accommodated many Baḥraynī immigrants who participated in the conquests of Iraq and Iran (it is suggested that one-fifth of al-Baṣra's population was from the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays), but also took sizable shares of the Gulf trade activities.[135] In other words, the diversion of trade to al-Baṣra as well as a major migration of Baḥraynīs seems to have affected the seaports of Baḥrayn. Kennet even dates the economic decline to the Sasānid period (third-seventh centuries) on the basis that this period's number and size of settlements, the number of tombs and the amount of coinage in circulation were less than those belonged to Hellenistic/Parthian periods.[136]

Second, merchants from the ʿAbbāsid territories and perhaps from India and China are likely to have avoided dealing with Baḥraynī seaports during the eighth and ninth century for several reasons. Piracy was conducted from bases in Baḥrayn and neighbouring areas against

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[132] Abū al-Buhlūl reports:' وقد تجردت لمناصبة القرامطة – خذلهم الله – ومحاربتهم في ذات الله، فعمدت إلى طرف من أطراف مملكتهم يعرف بالعقير، وهو دهليز الأحساء، ومصب الخيرات منه إليها، وكثرة الارتفاعات التي جل الاعتماد عليها، فخربته، وبالحضيض الأسفل ألحقته، وقطعت المادة منه عنهم، وضيقت فجاج ما كان يتسع لهم وعليهم، وحميت موارد ارتفاعاتها دونهم.' See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, vol.2, 992.

[133] Perhaps he quoted other sources. See Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.4, 138.

[134] See Chapter Three.

[135] Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAlī, *al-Tanẓīmāt al-Ijtimāʿiyya wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyya fiʾl-Baṣra fiʾl-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijrī* (Beirut: Dār al-Talīʿa, 1953), 49-50; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-ʿĀnī, *al-Baḥrayn fī Ṣadr al-Islām* (Beirut: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Mawsūʿāt, 2000), 123.

[136] Derek Kennet, 'The Decline of Eastern Arabia in the Sasanian Period,' *Arabic Archaeology and Epigraphy* 18 (2007): 86-122, at 86.

ships sailing in the Gulf. The ʿAbbāsids sent naval armies to combat them as reported Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ (d.854 CE) and Ibn Khurdādhba (d.912 CE).[137] Furthermore, the Qarāmiṭa, who might have halted piracy later, began to impose a heavy tax on the ships that came to the island of Uwāl. Ibn Ḥawqal, who travelled between 943 CE and 969 CE, described this tax as *al-ḍarība al-ʿaẓīma* (the major tax).[138] Also, Baḥrayn had an extremely negative reputation in the eyes of Muslims. Contemporary medieval sources viewed the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn as heretics and bandits who committed immoral and barbaric acts toward the pilgrims of Mecca. Their most notorious deed was the extraction of the Black Stone from the Kaʿba and its transfer to al-Qaṭīf.[139] This level of insecurity probably had an enormously negative impact on the merchants, which may have caused many to avoid dealing with Baḥrayn, and maintain a sort of boycott perhaps even encouraged by the ʿAbbāsids and Būyids. The seaport of Sīrāf owed its success to this situation.[140]

Third, between 1073 CE and 1171 CE, the Fāṭimids succeeded in diverting the main maritime trade route with Asia from the Gulf to the Red Sea, which caused the seaports on the Gulf to fall into recession. Bernard Lewis and later Bramoullé posed hypotheses to explain this operation. They suggested that the Fāṭimid vizier Badr al-Jamālī, prompted by the challenge of the Seljūqs and the Crusaders in Syria, introduced a new policy of diverting the maritime trade route from the Gulf to the Red Sea, in order to fund his army and buy the material needed to build ships. Several steps were taken to succeed in this grand operation. The Fāṭimids were already in control of a network of maritime trade stations on both shores of the Red Sea, including Judda, as well as Yemen (Aden) on the Arabian Sea. The Fāṭimids also had missionaries and an Ismāʿīlī merchant community in India. They also attracted and kept in touch with Jewish merchants to work in Egypt. Furthermore, the Fāṭimids combated piracy in the Red Sea and made it safe for traders to travel to Egypt.[141] These measures perhaps resulted in

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[137] Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ, *Tārīkh Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt*, ed. Akram al-ʿUmarī (Dimashq: Dār al-Qalam, 1397 [1977]), 447, 450; Abū al-Qāsim ibn Khurdādhba, *al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik* (Leiden: Brill, 1889), 90. For more information on piracy in the medieval Near East see Badir al-Rashīdī, *al-Khalīj wa-Āsyā*, 150-175.

[138] Abū al-Qāsim ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-Arḍ*, 33.

[139] See the collection of texts written to condemn the Qarāmiṭa in Suhayl Zakkār, ed., *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa fiʾl-Ahsā, al-Shām, al-ʿIrāq, wa-l-Yaman*, 295-317, 349-384, 387-397.

[140] See Badir al-Rashīdī, *al-Khalīj wa-Āsyā,* 159.

[141] See Bernard Lewis, 'The Fatimids and the Route to India,' *Revue de la Faculte des Sciences Economiques* d'Istanbul, 11 (1953): 50-54; David Bramoullé, 'The Fatimids and the Red Sea (969-1171)' in *Navigated Spaces, Connected Places: Proceedings of Red Sea Project V held at the University of Exeter, 16–19 September 2010*, ed.

minimising the amount of exchange between Asia and the Gulf seaports in general including the seaports of Baḥrayn. Richard Bulliet recently argued that this transference of major trade activities to the Mediterranean occurred after the decline of Iranian economy from the early eleventh century to the first half of twelfth century. He argued that this decline was due to a severe climate change which he named 'the Big Chill' that affected Iran's agriculture and trade activities.[142] It seems that this economic deterioration in Iran also affected Baḥrayn's economy because both operated in the Gulf.

Fourth, the Iranian seaports on the Gulf were more successful in trade than the Baḥraynī seaports were. After the collapse of the Fāṭimids in 1171 CE, the Gulf Kingdom of Kīsh, under Banī Qayṣar in the late twelfth century, emerged as a powerful trading polity and began to restore the old maritime trade route to the Gulf. The already idle seaports of Eastern Arabia, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, faced high competition with the seaports on the eastern shores of Iran and even Oman.[143] Contemporary sources include more information about the Iranian seaports than about their counterparts in eastern Arabia. The Iranian seaports, such as Sīrāf, then Kīsh and later Hormuz/Jārūn, in addition to the Omanī seaport of Ṣuḥār and then Qalhāt, which were under the kingdom of Hormuz, were the main seaports in the maritime trade network of the Gulf. They linked Iran and Iraq with the Indian Ocean. As Abu-Lughod suggests,

> The Mongol conquest of Persia and Iraq in the second half of the thirteenth century served to speed up local changes that were already underway. Baghdad, already in decline, was deprived of its status as titular capital, and even Basra, with the demotion of her chief destination, lost her importance as the primary gateway to Baghdad and then the Mediterranean. The two intermediaries that gained most from the new arrangement of power were Hormuz and Qays [Kīsh].[144]

Therefore, Kīsh and Hormuz rose to prominence and produced powerful independent polities that controlled trade and subjugated the islands of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. Accordingly, the

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Dionisius A. Agius et al. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012), 130; David Whitehouse, 'Maritime Trade in the Gulf: The 11th and 12th Centuries,' *World Archaeology: Islamic Archaeology* 14/3 (1983): 328-334.

[142] Richard Bulliet, *Cotton, Climate, and Camels: A Moment in World History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 69, 93-94 138-139.

[143] For information and analysis on the Kingdom of Kīsh see Ralph Kauz, 'The Maritime trade of Kish' in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 55-57.

[144] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 205.

eastern shore seaports of the Gulf were far more active than the western Baḥraynī seaports, which resulted in the marginalisation of Baḥrayn in eastern Arabia.[145]

Three main consequences resulted from Baḥrayn's geographical and political and economic isolation. First, detailed information on Baḥrayn are largely absent in the chronicles and historical writings of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Egypt. The second consequence was the lack of scholarship in the region and limited scholarly interaction between the Baḥraynī people and other learning centres.[146] In addition, the political and economic weakness of the polities of the region discouraged patronage, thus hindering scholarship. As we will see in Chapter Six, a number of Baḥraynī men of letters emigrated from the region to areas that were more advanced.[147] The third consequence was the religious popular beliefs held by the Baḥraynī people *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE which differ from the main cities in Iraq, Iran and Egypt.

9. Conclusion.

The region of Baḥrayn was located in east Arabia, on the Gulf and extended from southern al-Baṣra to northern Oman. It is separated from Najd by The Dahnāʾ desert in the west. Its main areas were al-Aḥsāʾ, al-Qaṭīf, the island of Uwāl and al-Ṣummān valley. Its main geographic characteristics were its isolation, desert landscape, harsh climate and overwhelming nomadic population. Agriculture centred in the little oases that relied on ground water. Pastoralism was the main resource of the nomads which gave them advantage over the sedentary because of their control of the overland routes.

The economic status of Baḥrayn witnessed a gradual shift from a severe decline during the beginning to mid-eleventh century, to a gradual improvement during the second half of the eleventh and early twelfth century. Relative prosperity occurred during the mid-thirteenth and fourteenth centuries after the seaports were annexed by the successful Iranian-based polities. Several factors contributed to the decline and rise of Baḥrayn's economy. The most obvious

[145] On Iranian seaports see Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 197-207.
[146] The region's geographical location did not align with the centres of the influential empires of the East and the Near East, which stretched from China through northern Iran, Iraq, and Syria to Egypt, a route that accommodated the most powerful and productive civilisations and empires.
[147] See Chapter Six on the literature in Baḥrayn.

reason for the general decline of the economy was perhaps the country's physical and human geography and its relative remoteness. Baḥrayn's geographical isolation—mainly as a result of its surround by deserts, its harsh climate, and its overwhelming nomadic population—detached the region from the better developed centres in the north. The hostile relationship between the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn (899-1077 CE) and the caliphate in Iraq as well as piracy, the massive tax imposed on the ships that crossed the island of Uwāl likely resulted in a kind of boycott by the traders. Furthermore, the Fāṭimids successfully managed to divert the maritime trade route from the Gulf to the Red Sea, which had a greatly negative effect on the Gulf. In addition, the polities of Baḥrayn did not seem to have had interest in maritime projects, such as rebuilding the damaged seaport of al-ʿUqayr, or building large and effective commercial and military fleets. This prevented Baḥrayn from achieving naval superiority, let alone having a naval presence in the region. As a result, the Iranian seaports dominated instead. From the 1150s CE onwards, polities based in Iran restored the maritime route from the Red Sea and began to dominate the Gulf. The first was the kingdom of Kīsh, then the Salghūrids of Fārs, then the Ṭībids in Fārs, and later the kingdom of Hormuz. These polities annexed Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf and detached them from the ʿUqaylids in al-Aḥsāʾ. The polities made Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf two transit centres among many in the maritime trade network of the Gulf, but Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf apparently assumed the smallest share of maritime trade activities. The Baḥraynīs of inner east Arabia relied heavily on overland trade. The ʿUqaylids established a political relationship with the Mamlūks, which turned later into a trade relationship.

Chapter Two:

The Emergence of the Baḥraynī Emirates of Āl al-Zajjāj on the Island of Uwāl and Āl ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf

1. Introduction.

This chapter deals with the historical events that ushered in a new era of local rule in the region of Baḥrayn, which paved the way for indigenous dynasties. It studies the revolts that broke out against the Qarāmiṭa from 1050s CE, which led to the establishment of the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj on the island of Uwāl and the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf. It also analyses the potential factors behind these revolts and attempts to interpret the rebels' contact with the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and the Seljūqs.

The Qarmāṭian polity (899-1077 CE) was established by Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥasan ibn Bahrām al-Jannābī, a native of Jannāba in Persia, and a number of Ismāʿīlī missionaries who immigrated from Kūfa in Iraq, and Syria. The name was given to them by their opponents after one of the Ismāʿīlī missionaries, Ḥamdān Qurmuṭ or Qarmaṭ. Initially, the leaders of the sect propagated their doctrine among sedentary people in al-Qaṭīf, which they eventually seized power. Later, they succeeded in recruiting the Bedouins of Baḥrayn, forming a powerful army. The Qarāmiṭa conquered the town of Hajar, destroyed it and built the town of al-Aḥsāʾ, which became their capital. Later, they dominated the region through both subjugation of, and alliances with other Baḥraynī groups. The Qarāmiṭa then expanded their territories and invaded almost the entire Arabian Peninsula, southern Iraq, Syria, even attempting to invade Egypt. There, they fought an unsuccessful battle with Jawhar al-Ṣiqillī (d.992 CE), the Fāṭimid general who had established Cairo.

The Qarāmiṭa used to collect sizeable revenues from several sources, such as their control over land trade routes, booty, taxes from the conquered people, and the tributes occasionally paid to them by both the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and the Fāṭimid Caliphate. Their riches allowed them to mint their own gold coins, many of which were discovered in Palestine/Syria and in other places they had occupied.

The Qarāmiṭa's decline began after the death of their powerful leader al-Ḥasan al-Aʿṣam ibn Aḥmad al-Jannābī in 977 CE. Rival members of the ruling family of the Jannābīs assumed control of the polity, but failed to continue its military, economic and political success. The Qarāmiṭa shrank to their base in Baḥraynī towns and were deprived of the revenues which they had formerly collected. They even became the object of raids launched by rivals outside their territory, suffering two defeats: to the Būyids' army in 985 CE, and to the Bedouins of Banū Thaʿlab al-Muntafiq in 988 CE, which was also sent by the Caliph and the Būyids in Baghdād. It is reported that the Qarmāṭian leaders formed an unusual political system; instead of having a single leader at the top of the polity's hierarchy, they established the 'council of the masters' *majlis al-sāda*, a council that included six governors from the family of al-Jannābī and six viziers called *al-shāʾira* (advisors) from the family of Āl Sunbur. However, this council reflects the lack of central authority and powerful leader. In these deteriorated political and economic conditions, minor Baḥraynī tribal chiefs as well as family leaders from among the sedentary inhabitants of the region sought to seize power from the Qarāmiṭa.[148]

The tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays was the most prevalent and deeply rooted sedentary tribe in the region of Baḥrayn and its main towns and oases. Its political role within the Qarmāṭian polity was significantly important as some of its members occupied many key military, administrative and financial positions, such as army commanders and tax collectors. The weakened condition of the Qarmāṭian polity, resulting from its recurrent battles with the Bedouins of the western Iraqi desert and the decline in its revenues, as well as the rise of the Seljūqs and their domination of the Caliphate in Baghdād, encouraged a number of families and officials from ʿAbd al-Qays to revolt simultaneously against the Qarmāṭians whom they had previously served.

However, these families of ʿAbd al-Qays were not united in their political and sectarian tendencies. They did not act as a traditional nomadic tribe which rallies around its sheikh or emir and commits to a single political objective. Rather, each family pursued its own agenda and interests, which eventually led to their clash. Instead of revolting under a single political

[148] For primary sources on the history of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn see Suhayl Zakkār, ed., *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa fiʾl-Ahsā, al-Shām, al-ʿIrāq, wa-l-Yaman,* 192-240, 333-335, 358, 460-476, 489-518, 589-602; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1285. For recent secondary literature see Farhad Daftary, *The Ismaʿilis: Their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 150, 161-162; May Āl Khalīfa, *Min Sawād al-Kūfa ilā al-Baḥrayn: Al-Qarāmiṭa min Fikra ilā* Dawla (Beirut: al-Muʾasasa al-ʿArabiyya liʾl-Dirasāt waʾl-Nashr, 2010); Jere L. Bacharach, *Islamic History through Coins: An Analysis and Catalogue of Tenth-Century Ikhshidid Coinage* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2006), 83-86.

leadership, the tribe was divided into three rival families, each of which independently rose against the Qarmāṭians. The first revolt was staged by the Sunni Abū al-Buhlūl Āl al-Zajjāj in Uwāl using economic and religious justifications. It led to the establishment of the so-called the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj. The second revolt was begun in al-Qaṭīf by Yaḥyā Āl ʿAbbās. This revolt led to the foundation of the so-called the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās. Both emirates were short-lived. The third revolt was begun near al-Aḥsāʾ by ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, who later formed his emirate which lasted for about 160 years and was called the ʿUyūnid emirate. It will be studied in the next two chapters. This chapter will only discuss the history of the emirates of Āl al-Zajjāj and Āl ʿAbbās.

The chapter argues that the revolts which broke out in Baḥrayn were caused by the economic deterioration of the region as well as the Qarāmiṭa's lack of central and powerful authority. As reflected in contemporary historical sources and archaeology and was discussed in the previous chapter, piracy, followed by high tax imposed on ships that passed Baḥraynī seaports, followed by general economic recession in the Gulf area and Iran, the Qarāmiṭa's infamy as a result of provocative deeds, such as the plundering of pilgrims, the attacks on Mecca and the seizure and transport of the Black Stone to al-Qaṭīf caused the region to be abandoned and its maritime trade to be weakened. Since the polity was heavily reliant on overland economic activities, such as booty and taxation, which eventually came to an end, they became deprived of their main economic resources. This prevented them from maintaining control over the Baḥraynī groups.

It is further argued that the letters sent by the Baḥraynī leaders of rebellions to the Caliphate and the Seljūqs were not only requests for military and financial support which they appeared to be, but were likely also to have served as reassuring messages and an implicit invitation for the fearful ʿAbbāsid merchants to resume trade in Baḥrayn. These letters clearly shows the hierarchical position of Baḥrayn as they constituted a contact from a peripheral area to the core power area requesting commercial, political and religious rapprochement.

2. The Revolt of Uwāl and the Emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj 1050s-1070s CE.

This section discusses and analyses the sources of the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj. It recounts his revolt, battles against the Qarāmiṭa and the establishment of his emirate, as well as his contract to the Abbasid Caliph.

The historical account of the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj is provided by three sources. The first source is contemporary, written by the historian Ghars al-Niʿma Muḥammad ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābiʾ (1025-1088 CE), who belonged to the al-Ṣābiʾ family. This family possessed close links to the Caliphal court and its members served the Caliphs as doctors, secretaries and writers. Ghars al-Niʿma worked for the Caliph al-Qāʾim in his chancery '*dīwān al-inshāʾ*', and may have used its documents and associates to write a work that has not survived *Dhayl tārīkh Hilāl* or *ʿUyūn al-tawārīkh*, a supplement to his father's history book.[149] The second source is the universal chronicle, *Mirʾāt al-zamān fī tawārīkh al-aʿyān* by the historian Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (1186-1257 CE), who, fortunately, quoted parts of Ghars al-Niʿma's information directly.[150] The third source is the commentary on the poetry collection of ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī (1176-1230s CE) *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* by an anonymous commentator.[151] The commentator, who was not a contemporary of the early events he described, is likely to have used an independent Baḥraynī source. The evidence for this hypothesis lies in the author's statement when briefly recounting part of Abū al-Buhlūl's story, he wrote that he relied on the 'learned people' *ahl al-ʿilm* who witnessed the time of rise of ʿAbdullāh al-ʿUyūnī [in 1077 CE].'[152] Another possibility is that the commentator may have read and rephrased the story from Ghars al-Niʿma and Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī. The version of the narrative in *Sharḥ dīwān*'s provides greater detail and includes slightly different place names to those recorded by Ghars al-Niʿma and Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī. Nonetheless, *Sharḥ dīwān*'s slight differences in narration do not completely contradict the earlier sources.

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[149] Muḥammad Kamāl, 'Ghars al-Niʿma (Muḥammad ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābiʾ) in *al-Mawsūʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, ed. Mahmūd al-Sayyid et al. (Dimashq: Hayʾat al-Mawsūʿa al-ʿArabiyya, Riʾāsat al-Jumhūriyya, 1998-2008), vol.13, 807.

[150] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, 'Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān,' in *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, 244-246; see the new full edition Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥasan and Kāmil al-Kharrāṭ (Dimashq: al-Risāla al-ʿĀlamiyya, 2013), vol.19, 187-189.

[151] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, ed. ʿAbdulkhāliq al-Janbī, ʿAlī al-Bayk and ʿAbdulghanī al-ʿIrfān (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī li-ʾl-Nashr waʾl-Tawzīʿ, 2003), vol.2, 949-950, 982-996.

[152] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 949. He writes:' ذكر أهل العلم ممن أدرك قيام عبدالله بن علي العيوني على القرامطة'

The account of the emirate provided in *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* (in particular the Berlin manuscript) contains a letter sent by Abū al-Buhlūl to the Caliph that does not exist in full in *Mirʾāt al-zamān*. Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, who copied directly from Ghars al-Niʿma wrote that Abū al-Buhlūl sent a letter informing the Caliphate of his victory over the Qarāmiṭa; the letter is not quoted. There are two possible explanations for this: first, the letter may have been included in Ghars al-Niʿma's chronicle from which it was copied by the anonymous commentator of the *dīwān*. However, Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī may have removed this letter when quoting Ghars al-Niʿma because he did not want to add extra material which would make his book too large (it has just been published in a total 22 volumes).[153] He already wrote that Abū al-Buhlūl had indeed sent a letter to Abū Manṣūr ibn Yūsuf (an associate of the ʿAbbāsid court). The second possible explanation is that the commentator of the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* may have used a lost Baḥraynī source which included the letter and was not available to Ghars al-Niʿma. The contents and analysis of this letter will be discussed below.

These sources report, with slightly different details, the account of the revolt. It appears to have taken place around 450/1058. Before his revolt, Abū al-Buhlūl al-ʿAwwām ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Zajjāj, who belonged to the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays, had been appointed by the Qarāmiṭa, as the tax collector/tenant-in-chief *ḍāmin* of the island of Uwāl. Abū al-Buhlūl and his brother Abū al-Walīd offered 3000 dinars to the Qarāmiṭa in order to gain their permission to build a mosque on the island. His aim in this, according to the *Sharḥ dīwān*, was to boost the economy of the island by attracting foreign merchants and passengers, who had abandoned Uwāl because of its lack of mosques. Once the permission for the mosque had been obtained and its building work completed, Abū al-Walīd began to mention the name of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Qāʾim (r.1031-1075 CE) in the *khuṭba*. This move was opposed by a number of Ismāʿīlī Shīʿite people in Uwāl who claimed that he should instead mention the name of the Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī Caliph in Egypt al-Mustanṣir (r.1036-1094 CE), especially after the temporary deposition of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Qāʾim in 450/1058 at the hands of al-Basāsīrī, the Ismāʿīlī Turkmen general who also began to name al-Mustanṣir in the *khuṭab* of Baghdād's mosques. However, the leaders of Āl al-Zajjāj never ceased their *khuṭba* to al-Qāʾim. They even requested from the Qarāmiṭa to endorse their new practice and sent them gifts.

[153] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥasan and Kāmil al-Kharrāṭ (Dimashq: al-Risāla al-ʿĀlamiyya, 2013), vol.19, 187-189.

The protesting Ismāʿīlī people reported the new Sunni practice to the Qarāmiṭa in al-Aḥsāʾ who, surprisingly, approved it. Accordingly, more people in Uwāl joined Abū al-Buhlūl and increased his power. Indeed, the building of the mosque proved successful in attracting merchants to the island and business there resumed, as reported by *Sharḥ dīwān*. When this good news reached the Qarāmiṭa, they ordered their governor in Uwāl, Ibnʿ Urhum, to tax the people. However, the governor and Abū al-Buhlūl and his people refused to comply with the Qarāmiṭa and accordingly staged a revolt. Abū al-Buhlūl took several steps to effectively rid the island of the Qarāmiṭa and their influence. He formed an army of thirty thousand men which included his family as well as a number of influential and wealthy merchants from the island, such as Ibn Abī al-ʿUryān. He then fought and defeated the troops of the new governor sent by the Qarāmiṭa to Uwāl.

The Qarmāṭian vizier Ibn Sunbur, having being made aware of the revolt in Uwāl, sent one of his sons to gather money and weapons from Oman. This news reached Abū al-Buhlūl, who ambushed Ibn Sunbur's son on his return, killing him and some of his troops and claiming all of the spoils. Abū al-Buhlūl later killed his ally Ibn Abī al-ʿUryān, accusing him of betrayal and plotting with the Qarāmiṭa's vizier Ibn Sunbur.

Subsequently, Ibn Sunbur sought to suppress the revolt of Abū al-Buhlūl personally. He sailed from the mainland with a naval fleet composed of ships of the *al-shadhā* type containing troops from the tribe of Āmir Rabīʿa along with five hundred horses; his intention was to dock and fight on the land. However, Abū al-Buhlūl preferred to fight at sea, where he thought his soldiers would prove more experienced, rather than engaging with the apparently superior ground forces of the Qarāmiṭa. Accordingly, he prepared his ships and waited for the arrival of his enemies near a coastal village called al-Ḥāla (north of the isle of Sitra). The resulting naval battle saw the defeat of the Qarāmiṭa and the flight of Ibn Sunbur to the coast. Abū al-Buhlūl claimed the spoils of the remaining ships, weapons and horses.[154] Another account, recorded solely in *Sharḥ dīwān*, describes how a second fleet of the Qarāmiṭa, composed of Yemenī

[154] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān*, vol.19, 187-188; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 982-988.

troops led by the Baḥraynī Bishr ibn Mufliḥ al-ʿUyūnī, sailed to Uwāl but was also defeated and sunk in the sea near a small isle called Kaskūs Uwāl.[155]

Following these victories, Abū al-Buhlūl addressed a letter to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Qāʾim (r.1031-1075 CE). The letter was sent to a mediator named Abū al-Manṣūr ibn Yūsuf, who was perhaps close to the Caliph's court or who may have held a position in the chancery. In the letter Abū al-Buhlūl paid his allegiance to the Caliph, detailed his defection from the Qarāmiṭa and eventually requested military and financial support. However, it seems that the Caliph probably ignored the letter. According to Ghars al-Niʿma, this story reached him in 458/1066 when he said: *warada al-khabar* (the news arrived).[156]

The letter is comparatively long and written in a rhetorical style.[157] The writer begins by describing himself and his tribe, ʿAbd al-Qays, as supporters of Sunni Islam, the four rightly guided Caliphs and the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate. He then explains the atrocities committed by the Qarāmiṭa, and the danger which they imposed, describing how [true/Sunni?] Muslims were almost extinct in the region of Baḥrayn, except on the island of Uwāl. For this reason, the people, including his family, decided to place him in command of a revolt against the Qarāmiṭa which was successful. He also writes that they followed the Ḥanafī School of jurisprudence, which was the official legal School of the ʿAbbāsids, and that they had begun to mention the name of the Caliph al-Qāʾim in the *khuṭba*. He states that they had militarily defeated the Qarāmiṭa in Uwāl, but complains that, owing to a shortage of money, they were unable to invade al-Aḥsāʾ. He makes it very clear that they were in great need of financial and military support from the Caliphate not only to defeat the Qarāmiṭa, but also the Khārijites of Oman [perhaps the Ibāḍīs of Oman], and the Bedouin of Baḥrayn [Banū ʿĀmir].

The letter is written in a first-person narrative, yet does not include the name of its author; the commentator of *Sharḥ dīwān* writes that it was Abū al-Buhlūl Āl al-Zajjāj. The letter also does not include the year of writing, although the writer gives the day and month as 23rd *Dhū al-Qaʿda*. However, from a piece of information provided within the letter, we can deduce the year of composition. The writer explains to the Caliph that the Qarāmiṭa have been ruling the

[155] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 949-950.
[156] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥasan and Kāmil al-Kharrāṭ, vol.19, 187-188; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 988-996.
[157] Eight pages of *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 988-996.

region of Baḥrayn for 171 [Hijri] years. The editor of the *Sharḥ dīwān*, al-Janbī noted that if we consider the year 286/899 as the year of the establishment of the Qarāmiṭa, then the letter would have been written in approximately 457/1064.

Therefore, Abū al-Buhlūl apparently began the process of political and economic transition from around 1058-9 CE, culminating in his overthrow of the Qarāmiṭa in around 1064 CE. However, the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj did not last long: in the 460s/1070s CE, Abū al-Buhlūl was defeated by Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās al-Jadhamī of ʿAbd al-Qays the new ruler and another rebel of al-Qaṭīf.

3. The Revolt of al-Qaṭīf and the Emirate of Āl ʿAbbās.

This section presents an analytical account of the second revolt which led to the establishment of the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās/Ayyāsh. It also shed light on his encounter with the Turkmen military campaign that came to the region.

Information regarding this revolt and its resulting short-lived emirate is also very limited. The name of the rebel Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās is mentioned in the *Mirʾāt al-zamān* of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, who quoted Ghars al-Niʿma in the entry of the year 469 A.H. 1077 CE, giving him the *nisba* of al-Khafājī, instead of al-Jadhamī.[158] The account in greater detail is mentioned in *Sharḥ dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab* and its supplement. The exact date of this revolt is unknown. It occurred in the coastal town of al-Qaṭīf during the 460s/1070s and was led by Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās al-Jadhamī of ʿAbd al-Qays. He ended the Qarmāṭian rule in al-Qaṭīf obscurely and proclaimed himself the emir. Shortly afterwards, he invaded Uwāl and defeated Abū al-Buhlūl, hence assuming leadership of both al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. Yaḥyā later planned to invade al-Aḥsāʾ and defeat the Qarāmiṭa. He therefore sought military support from the Seljūqs, who had dominated Baghdād and the Islamic East. Yaḥyā contacted a mediator called Ibn al-Zarrād, who was described as an ʿAlawī and a *ghulām* (secretary, associate) of Kajkīnā, a Turkmen general *ḥājib* of Seljūq Sultan Malikshāh (r.1072-1092 CE). Ibn al-Zarrād persuaded Kajkīnā to send military support to Yaḥyā. By the terms of the deal agreed between Yaḥyā and the Turkmen general, the

[158] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān* (Damasacus: al-Risāla al-ʿĀlamiyya, 2013), vol.19, 321.

Seljūqs would send two hundred soldiers to be under Yaḥyā's command, and in return Yaḥyā would pay an annual tax to the Seljūqs and mention the name of the Sultan in the *khuṭba*.[159] The source *Sharḥ dīwān* says nothing about the Caliph, except for his share of the spoils. Perhaps Yaḥyā learned the lesson from Abū al-Buhlūl and realised that the Caliph was incapable of launching a military campaign; instead the real power rested with the Seljūqs.

The Seljūq court did not initially agree to send an army to support Yaḥyā. However, after further negotiations with insistence of Ibn al-Zarrād and Kajkīnā to march toward al-Qaṭīf, the Seljūqs are said to have permitted to let Kajkīnā to launch and lead the campaign. The Turkmen army was accompanied by Bedouin tribes from the Iraqi desert called Qays and Qibāth. However, when Yaḥyā heard of the arrival of such a massive army, he refused to come out to Kajkīnā or to receive the army in his town, as he feared that they were planning to occupy his town instead of supporting him. He claimed that he had requested only two hundred soldiers to be placed under his authority. Accordingly, Yaḥyā turned against the Turkmen and succeeded in convincing the Bedouins to desert the Turkmen army and cooperate with him. They defeated the Turkmen and forced them to withdraw to Iraq.[160]

Shortly afterwards, Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās died and left the emirate to his two sons; Zikrī and Ḥasan. The latter ruled al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl for some time and made failed attempts to invade al-Aḥsāʾ, which had come under the control of the new ʿUyūnid emirate, which had overthrown the Qarāmiṭa. Ḥasan ibn ʿAbbās used the policy of 'divide and rule' against the ʿUyūnid family members, but never succeeded in separating them. Ḥasan was later killed by his brother Zikrī who became the new emir of al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. Zikrī too tried to expand his territory by invading al-Aḥsāʾ under the emir ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī militarily. However, Zikrī's army was defeated in the battle of al-Nāẓira (after 1081 CE). The remnants of the army, including Zikrī himself fled to Uwāl and were pursued by the ʿUyūnid emir al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, who defeated them again. Eventually, Zikrī fled to al-Qaṭīf in a final attempt to save his emirate but was defeated for the final time by the emir ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, hence

[159] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 969-970
[160] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 970-973.

ending forever the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī became the sole emir of the main Baḥraynī towns, al-Aḥsāʾ, al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl.[161]

4. Conclusion.

The revolts of al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl by local families appear to have been driven by two factors. The first factor was related to the Qarāmiṭa's political weakness; and the second was related to the deterioration of the region's economy.

The Qarmāṭian polity in its final phase seems to have lacked central authority and was no longer ruled by a single powerful leader. The sources reported about the council of masters in which the decisions were taken collectively. Under these circumstances, it is normal that other ambitious leaders in the region take the initiative and try to seize power.

The previous chapter explained the economic recession in Baḥrayn and in the Gulf in general during the eleventh century. These revolts took place in the context of an economic decline. To summarise the economic situation: the Baḥraynī seaports saw a long-term decrease in trade activities since the establishment of al-Baṣra in the seventh century, which was accompanied by migration of Baḥraynī groups who had participated in the conquests of Iraq and Iran. The development of Sīrāf seaport on the eastern shores of the Gulf seems to have exacerbated the economic decline in the tenth century. Piracy was conducted in the Gulf near the shores of Eastern Arabia during the ninth and tenth centuries which indicates a lack of trade. Furthermore, the Qarāmiṭa, who based their economy on overland activities, later levied a heavy tax on ships that docked at the island of Uwāl. Ibn Ḥawqal describes this tax as *al-ḍarība al-ʿaẓīma* (the major tax). It appears that the rate of tax charged at the seaport of Uwāl was the highest in all the seaports of the Gulf. By the early eleventh century the Qarāmiṭa were no longer capable of collecting taxes from Arabia, Iraq, Syria and Egypt. In addition, they had an antagonistic relationship with the regional polities because of their negative reputation within the Muslim World. The stories of the Qarāmiṭa's waylaying and killing of the Ḥajj pilgrims, the stealing of the Black Stone and their heretical doctrine were widely referenced in contemporary

[161] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 979-981.

sources accompanied by harsh criticism and condemnation. This reflects and indicates the hostility or the feel of insecurity held by the Caliphates, scholars, and merchants toward the Qarāmiṭa. The impact of their high taxes is likely to have encouraged merchants to use Iranian seaports and to abandon Baḥrayn's trade centres. This abandonment is reflected in Abū al-Buhlūl's complaints regarding the economic recession in Uwāl and the merchants' lack of interest in stopping at and trading in Uwāl.

Having achieved some success in attracting merchants and hence improving the market in Uwāl following the building of the mosque and acknowledgement of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph in the *khuṭba*, Abū al-Buhlūl took his pragmatic initiatives further, particularly when he defeated the Qarāmiṭa and seized power in Uwāl. The letter discussed above, although explicitly requesting military and financial support, had perhaps other implicit purposes. The letter implies that it was safe to do business with Uwāl which was no longer held by the notorious Qarāmiṭa. It was an invitation to the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and the associated elite, including merchants, to start a full trading relationship with the new polity that was loyal to the ʿAbbāsids. Indeed the relatively detailed account of Abū al-Buhlūl's emirate written by the Iraqi court historian Ghars al-Niʿma indicates that the Uwālīs made an effort to convey an image of a new Uwāl.

While little is known about the background and circumstances of the revolt of Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās, he emulated Abū al-Buhlūl in Uwāl in contacting Baghdād (the core centre power). However, Yaḥyā was more pragmatic and aware than Abū al-Buhlūl. First, he chose not to contact the powerless Caliph, but rather the Seljūqs who held real control. Second, he made a conditional agreement with the Turkmen general for the overthrow of the Qarāmiṭa in al-Aḥsāʾ, specifying the shares of the spoils, the number of troops to be sent, the post-invasion ceremonial practices and the taxes to be paid by Yaḥyā. Third, when he realised that the Turkmen army and its leader had not kept to their side of the deal and intended to subjugate him under their authority, he was ready to fight them, successfully defeating and expelling them from Baḥrayn. In fact, the hesitation of the Seljūq Sultan regarding real involvement in Baḥrayn, as well as the length of the negotiations between Yaḥyā and the Seljūqs via mediators, points to the Seljūqs' lack of interest in the marginal and poor Baḥrayn.

Chapter Three:

The Rise of the ʿUyūnid Emirate: The Formative Period (1077-1140s CE)

1. Introduction.

The third emirate of the post-Qarmāṭian era in Baḥrayn was the ʿUyūnid emirate (1077-1236 CE). From its beginnings in al-Aḥsāʾ, it proved longer-lived than the aforementioned Zajjājid and ʿAbbāsid emirates. This sedentary polity formed its government in a similar way to that of contemporaneous medieval Islamic 'states' in terms of establishing administrative bodies and professionals, such as different types of *dawāwīn*, courts, a treasury, governors, landlords, tax collectors, a judiciary, an army, and a police force. They also constructed mosques and struck coins which they used not only for monetary exchange but also for religious and political expression.

However, the study of this emirate's history has suffered from neglect due to numerous obstacles, foremost among them the limitations of Baḥraynī primary sources, as well as the lack of interest shown by contemporary chroniclers in surrounding regions, who did not bother to write information regarding the ʿUyūnids or Baḥrayn. This suggests that the chroniclers and their patrons did not count the region among their priorities. Even in modern times, although a number of Arab historians, mainly from the Arabian Gulf, have attempted to draw attention to the emirate by producing a number of works, it has received very little concern from Western scholars who wrote about it superficially in small encyclopaedia entries. It is thus time to begin – or at least to revive – the discussion of the ʿUyūnids and to present the subject at length.

This chapter and the next one address three main questions. The first is to provide a reconstructed and analytical narrative of the history of the region under the ʿUyūnids from their successful revolt against the Qarāmiṭa in 469/1077 to their collapse at the hands of the Bedouin tribe of the ʿUqaylids and the Atābeg of Fārs in 1230s CE. It explains both the internal and external challenges that faced the new emirate, the relationship between the emirs and the other branches of the ruling family, the relationship between the ʿUyūnids and the tribe of the ʿUqaylids which acted as the main political rival to the emirs.

The second question relates to the emirate's foreign relations. The chapter discusses and challenges arguments posed by modern historians on a number of themes which were initially generated by their perception of the region as a battlefield between the Sunni ʿAbbāsids and Seljūqs on the one hand, and the Shīʿite Fāṭimids on the other. It reexamines whether or not there was a relationship in the formative period of the emirate between ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-Uyūnī and the Fāṭimid Caliphate in Cairo. It argues that the document on which modern historians rely to suggest the existence of a political and religious relationship between the Fāṭimids and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī is likely to be problematic because it predated the actual event it describes by at least six months. The chapter also attempts to reinterpret the relationship between the emirate and the Seljūqs. It reconsiders the conventional hypothesis that speaks of a Seljūq interest in the region, arguing that although the ʿUyūnids contacted the Seljūqs, and a military campaign arrived and cooperated with al-ʿUyūnī, the Seljūq Sultan apparently showed no commitment to or involvement in Baḥrayn. The Turkmen military campaigns that came to Baḥrayn were mistakenly understood by modern historians to have been dispatched on instructions from the Seljūq Sultan. It is likely that the region of Baḥrayn was not tempting to the Sultan, but instead to the Turkmen chiefs who followed their own political and economic interests; some of them sought to establish their own polity in an area relatively distant from Iraq and Iran. This pattern of Turkmen initiatives in forming autonomous polities became frequent after the battle of Manzikert in 1071 CE. Contrary to what modern historians used to believe, the Seljūq Sultans' power and authority over their Turkmen forces was not highly centralised. Also, the Sultans' political and military operations were not driven entirely by religious motives.

The third question relates to the emirate's institutions and economic policies. The chapter expands on the discussion of the administrative bodies established by the ʿUyūnids and examines how they functioned. It also attempts to understand how the emirate formed its military. Furthermore, the distribution of power and the agricultural policy of the emirate are discussed.

It appears that there were three main powers within the emirate: the ruling family of the ʿUyūnids, the Bedouins, especially the tribe of the ʿUqaylids, and the merchants and landlords who appeared to have the lowest rank, yet were seemingly influential in the political scene. In order for the emirs to keep their position, they had to dominate the Bedouins and the merchants. It is argued that the powerful emirs in the formative period of the emirate proved successful in

controlling the other political players, but the emirs, especially in al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf, ceded that supremacy and later came to their end when they lost control over the Bedouins, who received assistance from the merchants.

Recent historians, beginning with al-Mudayris, have divided the history of the ʿUyūnid Emirate into four phases. I will for the most part follow this division; the formative period; the political schism period; the reunification period; and the period of decline and fall. This chapter only discusses the formative period that began with ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī and ended with his grandson al-Faḍl (1077-1130s/40s CE). The next chapter deals with the periods of political division, reunification, and the decline and fall.

2. The Background of the ʿUyūnid Family and the Genealogy of the Founder ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī.

The ʿUyūnid family belonged to the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays and came originally from the oasis of al-ʿUyūn, 25km north of al-Aḥsāʾ, where they were agricultural landlords during the Qarmāṭian period. Some verses of Ibn al-Muqarrab state that the family's ancestor Ibrāhīm was not originally from Baḥrayn. Al-Janbī explains that some tribal branches of ʿAbd al-Qays had settled in Oman, and that Ibrāhīm was probably amongst them before he emigrated to Baḥrayn.[162]

Prior to the establishment of their own emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ, the ʿUyūnid family (Āl Ibrāhīm as they were called) seemingly held a highly significant role within the Qarmaṭian polity (899-1077 CE). Some members of the family occupied key military, administrative and fiscal positions, such as tax collectors, governors and military commanders, especially in the navy. An example of these employees was Bishr ibn Mufliḥ al-ʿUyūnī, a military commander who fought the rebel Abū al-Buhlūl Āl Zajjāj in *c*.1058 CE.[163]

With the weak condition reached by the Qarmaṭian polity after successive crises such as their military and political retraction, the economic downturn, and recurrent battles with the

[162] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1107, 1150, n.1596; Al-Bakrī, *Muʿjam mā Istaʿjam*, vol.1, 80-82. See also Ahmad Soud al-Hasan. 'The Tribe of ʿAbd Al-Qays in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Times to the End of the Umayyad Period' (PhD Diss., The University of Manchester, 1990).
[163] See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 950.

Bedouins of al-Muntafiq, beside the rise of the Seljūqs and their domination of the Caliphate in Baghdād,[164] the ʿUyūnid family led other groups and besieged al-Aḥsāʾ simultaneously with the two revolts and takeovers by Āl al-Zajjāj in Uwāl and Āl Abbās in al-Qaṭīf.[165]

Among these three anti-Qarmāṭian emirates of Baḥrayn, the ʿUyūnid emirate proved the most successful and the longest-lived, lasting for about 160 years. Its founder ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, together with his large and close-knit family led a coalition of Baḥraynī minor tribes and Turkmen supporters from Iraq which managed to topple the Qarāmiṭa in their last bulwark in al-Aḥsāʾ in 469/1077 after a six-year siege.[166]

The founder's genealogy is important to identify. This will help to determine the genealogical relationship between him and the poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī, as the latter's collection of poetry is the main source for the ʿUyūnid history. This relationship shows us whether or not the poet qualified for claiming the throne, which in turn may have affected the way in which he presented the history of the ʿUyūnids and described the emirs.

We are certain of the founder's first and second names, his family name, and both his immediate and wider tribal affiliation, as well as his *nisba* (attribution to either place of birth, residency or tribe). He was ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī of Āl Ibrāhīm of ʿAidh ibn Murra ibn ʿĀmir ibn al-Ḥārith[167] al-ʿAbdī (the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays) al-ʿUyūnī, which was a small village in north al-Aḥsāʾ (nowadays northern al-Hufūf). However, his grandfather's and great grandfather's names are debated by recent historians. Most of them interpret from the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* that his grandfather's name was ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad, thus believing that the poet was a descendant of the founder.

Nevertheless, al-Janbī and his co-editors of the *Sharḥ dīwān* argue that the poet was not a descendant of the founder. They used explicit poetic verses and suggested that the founder and his grandfather share the same first and second names, hence the full name was ʿAbdullāh ibn

[164] The Seljūqs' propaganda that portrayed them as pious Sunnis was well exploited by the Baḥraynī leaders who used it as a basis for seeking military support against the Qarāmiṭa.
[165] See Chapter Two which discusses the economic downturn of the Qarāmiṭa and the revolts of Abū al-Bulūl al-Zajjāj in Uwāl and Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf.
[166] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 961, 967.
[167] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 81, vol.2, 812.

ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (the grandfather) ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm.[168] The commentary also states this: 'because ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh, the father of the emir ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī, is a brother of Ḍabbār, and both of them are sons of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad.'[169] Accordingly, the poet was a descendent of the grandfather of the founder whose name was also ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī.[170]

[168] لأَنَّ علياً جدَّهُ عمِّيَ الذي يَطول به بيتي على من يُطاول وضَبَّار جَدِّي عَمُّه وكلاهما خليصان والعَمُّ المُهَذَّب ناجل

[169] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 637; see n.1798 in the same page.

[170] See the family tree of the ʿUyūnids in the appendix.

Key Dates of Events during the ʿUyūnid Emirate:

1077 CE	The collapse of the Qarāmiṭa and the foundation of the ʿUyūnid emirate after the battle of al-Raḥlayn.
1077/78 CE	The elimination of the Qarāmiṭa in the battle between the rivers of Muḥallim and Sulaysil.
1078 CE	The ʿUyūnids turned against the remnants of the Turkish Urtuqid army.
1079 CE	The unsuccessful invasion by Khamārtakīn al-Tutushī of al-Aḥsāʾ.
1081 CE	The unsuccessful invasion of al-Qārūtī.
1087 CE	The unsuccessful invasion by Rukn al-Dawla the Urtuqid after a one-year siege and their defeat in the battle of Bāb al-Ḥadīd.
1080s CE	The war between ʿAbdullāh al-ʿUyūnī and Zikrī Āl ʿAbbās. The battle of Nāẓira, the battle of Uwāl and the battle of al-Qaṭīf which all resulted in the victory of the ʿUyūnids and thus the subjugation of the entire region of Baḥrayn.
1124/5 CE	The expansion of al-Khamīs Mosque in Uwāl and the building of the first minaret by Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl
1140s-1190s CE	The period of ʿUyūnid political fragmentation among the three main cities of Baḥrayn after the murder of the emir Abū Sinān.
1154 CE	The Kīshid King Bākarzā invaded Uwāl, looted it and remained for some time before leaving. Then after some years, he waged several attacks on the island and attached it to his kingdom.
1170s CE	The emir ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh and his brother al-Zīr recaptured Uwāl from the Kīshid king Bākazrā in a battle and captivated the Kīshid king's brother Bamṣār.
1190s-1220s CE	The period of the emirate's recovery and reunification under Shukr ibn Manṣūr, followed by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī, who developed a military and political alliance with the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir for securing the pilgrimage routes.
1220s-1236 CE	The period of the emirate's decline.
1228 CE	The atābeg Abū Bakr conquered the island of Kīsh.
c. 1228 CE	The ʿUyūnid emir in al-Aḥsāʾ Abū al-Qāsim Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Manṣūr ʿAlī lost his rule forever for the leader of the ʿUqaylids ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid.
1229 CE	The Hormuzian King Abū al-Muẓaffar occupied Kīsh and sent his employee to collect tax from the ʿUyūnid Uwāl under the emir Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī.
1229 CE	The emir Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad repelled two Salghūrid naval attacks on al-Qaṭīf.
1231 CE	The emir Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad recaptured Uwāl from the Salghūrids.
c. 1233 CE	The emir Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad lost the rule of al-Qaṭīf for the ʿUqaylids.
1235 CE	The emir Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad visited the court of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Mustanṣir in Baghdād, perhaps to offer his allegiance and to bring his emirate under the ʿAbbāsid rule in an attempt to protect it from the Salghūrids.
1236 CE	The collapse of the ʿUyūnid rule in Uwāl at the hands of the Salghūrids who killed the emir Muḥammad.

Figure 7: Key dates of Events during the ʿUyūnid emirate.

List of the ʿUyūnid Emirs in the Region of Baḥrayn[1]

Period of Formation, Power and Unity 1077-1130s/40s CE

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī (ruled for 60 Hijrī years 1077- *c.*1135/6 CE)

Al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (ruled for 7 Hijrī years in the life of his father)

Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl (ruled for 18 Hijrī years. He is mentioned in an inscription made in the year 1124/5 CE)

Period of Political Fragmentation (ʿUyūnid city-states) *c.* 1130s/40s-*c.*1200 CE

In al-Aḥsāʾ	al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl
Abū Manṣūr ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh (?)	Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (11 years, coins struck by him between 1149- 1154 CE)
	Gharīr ibn al-Faḍl ruled al-Qaṭīf only for unknown period
Abū Mājid Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh (?)	ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī ruled al-Qaṭīf for 7 years
	Hajras ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullāh (ruled for 1 year)
	Shukr ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (ruled for 18 years)
	ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (?)
	Al-Zīr ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (ruled for more than 2 years)
	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl (ruled for less than a year, 1st ascendance)
	Al-Naqīb al-ʿAlawī in al-Qaṭīf (interim ruler for 40 days)
	Al-Musayyab of the house of ʿAbdullāh [al-ʿUyūnī] (ruled for 2 months)
	Ḥasan ibn Shukr ibn [al-Ḥasan] ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (ruled for more than 3 years)

Period of Recovery and Reunification *c.*1200-1220s CE

Shukr ibn Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī in al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl (ruled for 7 years)

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl (2nd ascendance, ruled for 18 years, a contemporary of the Caliph al-Nāṣir r.1180-1225)

Period of Decline and Fall 1220s-1230s CE

Muḥammad ibn Mājid ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh (?)	Gharīr ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Shukr ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh (1 year)
Abū al-Qāsim Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (?)	Faḍl ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (over 10 years)
Abū Manṣūr ʿAlī ibn Mājid (?)	Muqallad/Muqaddam ibn Mājid ibn Muḥammad (?)
ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (?)	Fāḍil ibn Maʿn ibn Shabīb ibn Jaʿfar ibn al-Faḍl (3 years)
Muqaddam ibn Azīz ibn al-Ḥasan (?)	Jaʿfar ibn Maʿn ibn Shabīb ibn Jaʿfar ibn al-Faḍl (?)
Abū al-Qasim Mas'ud ibn Muḥammad ibn Abi Manṣūr ʿAlī (*c.*1229)	Muḥammad ibn Masʿūd ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faḍl (2 years and a half)
	Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī ibn Mājid ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī (3 year and a half, around 1229 CE)
	Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Mājid ibn Muḥammad (*c.*3 years in al-Qaṭīf, *c.*5 years in Uwāl, defeated in 1236 CE)

[1] The dates of the emirs' reigns are not given in our sources. Yet, the appendix of the *Sharḥ Dīwān* lists the names of the emirs and only provides the periods of the reins of some of the emirs. The anonymous author appears to have in possession of more information on Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf than al-Aḥsāʾ. See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān,* vol.2, pp.1285-1296. Al-Janbī tried to correct some names and dates and to find more details on these emirs from the *Sharḥ Dīwān*.Al-Mudayris tried to deduce the dates of the emirs' rule by adding the given years starting from 1076 CE, but this could not be done accurately, because the list does not provide the periods of all of the emirs.

Figure 8: List of the ʿUyūnid emirs.

3. The Conquest of al-Aḥsāʾ: The Tribal Coalition's Siege against the Qarāmiṭa and their Allies.

In about 462/1070, the ʿUyūnid family led by the wealthy landlord ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī, in coalition with a number of minor tribes from the region, began to besiege al-Aḥsāʾ, the Qarāmiṭa's capital. The Qarāmiṭa were allied with the local tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā and some Yemenī tribes, such as ʿAtīk and Ḥuddān who perhaps belonged to the Yemenī Qarāmiṭa.[171]

Within the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, there are two different versions of the story of who fought on the side of the ʿUyūnids against the Qarāmiṭa: one in the original poem and another in its commentary. On the one hand, the commentator attempted to portray ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī as one of the bravest warriors in Arab history, who managed with only four hundred soldiers to defeat the Qarāmiṭa, the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā and the Yemenī tribes together.[172] This version of story is adopted by some recent historians. Al-Mudayris interprets that ʿAbdullāh was reluctant to cooperate with the tribes who might have refused him as a leader, and that they were already allied with the Qarāmiṭa.[173] Al-Mullā also chooses to accept this version of events, suggesting that al-ʿUyūnī may have not been popular as a leader among the Baḥraynī tribes because he had yet to achieve any military success.[174]

On the other hand, verses of a poem of ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab state that the Arabian tribes, including the Azd, agreed upon and nominated ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī as their leader against the Qarāmiṭa.[175] This piece of information is more convincing than the first account which is clearly an exaggeration aimed to give ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī alone the starring role and to minimise the contribution of the other tribes. Ibn al-Muqarrab's version of the story corresponds with the facts regarding the difficulty and the length of the blockade (six years) and the number of the Qarāmiṭa and their allies militate against the idea that four hundred soldiers alone could have accomplished the siege and conquest.

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[171] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 949, 1107-8, 1247.
[172] Anonoymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 951-952.
[173] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 85.
[174] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mullā, *Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya*, 148.
[175] This poem is the most important panegyric poem of ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī, called *al-Mīmiyya*, which he delivered in Baghdād in 1215 CE. It recounts praise for his family and narrates the story of the region including the Qarāmiṭa and their downfall, Abū al-Buhlūl, Ibn ʿAbbās' revolts and the Turkmen army. See Anonoymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 943-945. See the poem and its commentary vol.2, 920-1040.

Neither the poem, nor the commentary identifies the reasons behind the tribal coalition formed under the leadership of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī. If this revolt is understood as one in a series of revolts in the region of Baḥrayn, then why did this revolt require a type of coalition that was not formed in the revolts of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf?

It may be suggested that the conquest of al-Aḥsāʾ proved more complicated than those of the other Baḥraynī cities for a number of reasons. First, al-Aḥsāʾ constituted the central authority where the Qarāmiṭa resided and ruled; hence it was a comparatively stronger and wealthier city than al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. Second, it was surrounded by desert where the tribes controlled all of the routes which linked the city with the outside world. Third, generally speaking, the Arabian Bedouin tribal community's attitude, tradition and practice tended to provoke insurrection against a weak central authority, especially if this authority suffered a significant deficit and a shortage of financial resources. In the case of the Qarāmiṭa, they had already lost the island of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf and hence their tax, pearls and maritime trade revenues. Therefore, many tribes who were perhaps neglected by the Qarāmiṭa rallied around a local wealthy sedentary leader, whom they thought capable of organising and leading them to overcome the Qarāmiṭa and replace the tribes who were favoured by the Qarāmiṭa in protecting the caravans and trade routes, such as the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿa and the Yemenī tribes.[176]

4. The Turkmen Family/Tribe of the Urtuqids and the Nature of their Military Campaigns in Baḥrayn

The six-year-long siege weakened the Qarāmiṭa significantly, but failed to uproot them or force them to surrender until al-ʿUyūnī and the tribal coalition received an additional military support. This came from a Turkmen chief called Urtuq Beg, who arrived from Iraq with an army of seven thousand, as a second Turkmen campaign following the unsuccessful one led by Kajkīnā that had come to Āl ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf.[177]

There are also two versions of the story of the Urtuqid campaign in Baḥrayn. The first is offered by Ghars al-Niʿma, as cited in Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī's *Mirʾāt al-zamān*, and the second is

[176] Anonoymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 958, 968.
[177] This campaign is disussed in Chapter Two.

presented in *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*. They differ in the narrative length and in the details. In the brief narrative of Ghars al-Niʿma, there are no details to explain what motivated the Turkmen army to march toward al-Qaṭīf and al-Aḥsāʾ, or whether or not there was any kind of correspondence or prior arrangement between the Turkmen and ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh al-ʿUyūnī. In this source, ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh is named as al-Ghanawī, perhaps the mistake of a manuscript copyist. He is also erroneously described as a descendent or a son of Abū al-Buhlūl, the rebel then ruler of Uwāl.[178] The rest of the narrative agrees with that provided in *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*.

The detailed version of the narrative presented in *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab,* which constitutes a later source than Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī's work, reports that al-ʿUyūnī, in the sixth year of the siege – meaning 468/1076 – sent his delegates to convey a message to the Seljūq Sultan Jalāl al-Dawla Malik Shāh (d.1092 CE) and his vizier Niẓām al-Mulk (d.1092 CE) to make a political bargain. He sought a military assistance from the Seljūqs to aid him in uprooting the Qarāmiṭa and their allies from al-Aḥsāʾ; in return al-ʿUyūnī promised that he would mention the name of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph and the Seljūq Sultan in the *khuṭba* in al-Aḥsāʾ. As a result, a military campaign led by Urtuq arrived in Baḥrayn. The commentator writes: '… and the Sultan sent for him [al-ʿUyūnī] seven thousand Turkmen led by Urtuq.'[179]

Most of the modern historians of the ʿUyūnids read the above quote literally and identify the armies of Iraq that came to support the ʿUyūnids as Seljūq forces: i.e. troops directed by the central authority of the Sultanate.[180] They were perhaps following the commentator, who wrote two hundred years after the event, and described what he understood from the reaction caused by al-ʿUyūnī's request from Baghdād. In contrast, Madelung and recently Peacock did not view these armies as Seljūq forces, but as Turkmen.[181] I am inclined not to read the statement of *Sharḥ dīwān* literally, and favour an alternative interpretation; Urtuq Beg and his Turkmen are likely to

[178] Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, 'Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān' in *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, 247.
[179] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 960-967.
[180] M. J. de Goeje, 'La fin de l'empire des Carmathes du Bahrain,' 14; G. Rentz and W.E. Mulligan, 'al-Baḥrayn' *EI*^{2}; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 86-97; Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya al-Musammā Iqlīm Bilād al-Baḥrayn fī ẓil Ḥukm al-Duwailāt al-ʿArabiyya (469-963 A.H/1076-1555 A.D)* (Cairo: Maktabat Madbūlī, 2006) 91-103; Cahen writes that Urtuq 'brought the Qarāmiṭa under the rule of Malikshāh' see Claude Cahen, 'Artukids', *EI*^{2}.
[181] W. Madelung, 'Ḳarmaṭī', *EI*^{2}. Andrew Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 61.

have marched towards Baḥrayn on their own initiative and not because they were instructed to do so by the Seljūqs, who perhaps did not regard Baḥrayn as possessing the same geopolitical importance of Iran and Iraq. The Seljūq Sultans tended to leave these types of peripheral regions for the Turkmen/Oghuz leaders of their auxiliary armies to invade and rule as autonomous territories. Some of the rulers of these peripheral regions were later called Atābegs.[182] Baḥrayn appears to have been of great interest to a number of the Turkmen tribes/families and chiefs who supported and served under the Seljūq Sultans, such as Kajkīna, the Urtuqid family, Khamārtakīn and Qārūt Beg.

From a careful reading of the narratives of the campaigns as detailed in *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, we can see that the four Turkmen leaders were closely-related members of the same family: Urtuq Beg; his father Aksab or Aksak; his brother al-Bughūsh ibn Aksab; and Rukn al-Dawla, who al-Janbī suggests was Urtuq's grandson Rukn al-Dawla Dāwūd ibn Suqmān ibn Urtuq.[183] According to Cahen, Urtuq belonged to the Turkic tribe of Doger which belonged to the Oghuz. He served the Sultān Malikshāh (1072-1092 CE), assisting him with his tribe in conquering many areas. He then left the service of Malikshāh after a major dispute and went to work for Malikshāh's brother Tutush in Syria in 1079 CE.[184] His son Suqmān ibn Urtuq established a polity in Diyār Bakr in 495/1101, where their dynasty lasted for six centuries.[185]

There are five main reasons along with circumstantial evidence that support the interpretation of the Urtuqid military campaigns in Baḥrayn as not being instructed by the Seljūq Sultans, but perhaps as the political and economic enterprise of a Turkmen family/tribe.

This political and military attempt was similar to many projects of other Turkmen (Oghuz) chiefs who were authorised by Alp Arslān (1063-1072 CE) to establish their own

[182] Claude Cahen, 'Atabak', *EI*^{2}.
[183] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 978, n.970; See the family tree of the Urtuqids in the appendix.
[184] Claude Cahen, 'The Turkish Invasion: The Selchukids' in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. M. Setton (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), i, 158.
[185] For scholarship on the Urtuqid dynasty in al-Jazira and Syria see 'Imād al-Dīn Khalīl, *Al-Imārāt al-Urtuqīyah fī al-Jazīrah wa-al-Shām (465-812 H./1072-1409 M.): Aḍwā' Jadīdah 'alā al-Muqāwamah al-Islāmīyah li-'l-Ṣalībīyīn wa-al-Tatar* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1980); Claude Cahen, 'Artukids', *EI*^{2}; Carole Hillenbrand, *A Muslim Principality in Crusader Times: The Early Artuqid State* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1990)

beyliks, emirates[186] or Atābegates in Anatolia and elsewhere after his victory against the Byzantines at Manzikert in 1071 CE.[187] These polities were not entirely independent, they enjoyed autonomous status.

First, Urtuq funded his campaign by looting the cities and towns which his army passed on its way to Baḥrayn, even if these towns were already under the Seljūqs' authority. Our sources, *Sharḥ dīwān* and *Mirʾāt al-zamān*, state that the Urtuqids looted al-Baṣra, al-Qaṭīf and the farms on the outskirts of al-Aḥsāʾ.[188] There is no evidence that the Urtuqids received financial and military support from the central authority, which indicates that the Urtuqids did not start an 'official' campaign and were not sponsored by the Seljūq central authority which used the *ghulāms* army in their invasions.[189]

Second, except for Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī's *Mirʾāt al-zamān*'s brief report regarding Urtuq's march toward Baḥrayn, which shows no link with the Seljūq Sultans, the other historical sources dedicated to the Seljūqs did not record these campaigns as they did with many Seljūq conquests.[190] This suggests that the Urtuqid campaigns were not related to the Seljūq Sultans, who were the subject of the historians' chronicles. We find plenty of information regarding the Urtuqids when they were dealing with the Seljūqs; for example, the positions that they occupied and the land grants that they received.[191] However, we find almost nothing concerning their expeditions in Baḥrayn.

Third, during the time of the Urtuqid incursions to Baḥrayn, Urtuq was already ruling the towns of Ḥulwān and al-Jabal (near Diyālā in Iraq). Ibn Khallikān states that Urtuq subjugated

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[186] Iqsīs or Atsaz ibn Abaq was perhaps the first general to establish his own principality in Damascus in 1076 CE after he defeated the Fāṭimids in Syria. He later besieged Cairo but was eventually defeated and returned to Syria where he was pursued by the Fāṭimid army and was besieged by them in Damascus. This led him to request assistance from Tutush the brother of Malikshāh. Tutush arrived, killed Astaz, and proclaimed himself emir. See ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fiʾl-Tārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad al-Daqqāq (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1987), vol.8, 410, 412, 418.

[187] Songul Mecit, *The Rum Seljūqs: Evolution of a Dynasty* (London: Routledge, 2014), xiv, 28.

[188] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, 'Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-Aʿyān', 147; Anonoymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 962.

[189] On the '*ghulāms*' soldiers see A.C.S. Peacock, *Early Seljūq History: A New Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 2010), 94-98.

[190] See the main primary sources on the Seljūqs: Ẓahīr al-Dīn Nīshapūrī, *Saljūqnāme*, ed. Aych Murtun (Warminster: Bunyād-e Yādigār-e Ī. Jay. Dābil Yū. Gīb, 2004); Al-Fatḥ al-Bundārī, *Kitāb Tārīkh Dawlat Āl Seljūq* (Bāb al-Khalq Egypt [Cairo]: Sharikat Ṭabʿ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, 1900); Ibn al-Athīr, *The Annals of the Saljuq Turks: Selections from al-Kāmil fiʾl-Tārīkh of 'Izz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr*, trans. D.S. Richards (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002)

[191] ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fiʾl-Tārīkh*, vol.8, 433.

these towns and that they were not given to him (as a *qaṭīʿa*, land grant, presumably by the Seljūqs).[192] Therefore, I assume that the Urtuqids sought to establish a dynasty for themselves at a location relatively distant from the Great Seljūq's cities of residence, and they chose Baḥrayn. The evidence for this hypothesis is that after they failed in Baḥrayn, the family under Suqmān ibn Urtuq succeeded in establishing an autonomous polity in Diyār Bakr in 495/1101, where their dynasty lasted for six centuries.[193]

Fourth, the depiction of the Seljūqs as exercising full control and enjoying strict central authority over their Turkmen forces is problematic and unrealistic as shown by recent scholarship. The analyses of Omid Safi and Andrew Peacock suggest that the Turkmen tribes and the Seljūq Sultans did not act as a single body and did not always share identical interests. Peacock demonstrates that 'we can not speak of the Turkmen associated with the Seljūq family as a coherent unit, acting of one accord either in harmony with or against the wishes of the Seljūqs', and that 'the units that came together to form what we may call the Seljūq tribes had their own self-interest at heart first and foremost.'[194] Omid Safi also demonstrates that the Seljūq Sultans had to struggle with their fellow Turkmen, who were keen on plundering the cities of Khurāsān and that the Sultans were not in full control over their actions.[195]

Fifth, Urtuq's loyalty to Malikshāh was conflicting. His independent political aspirations were demonstrated when he planned with the emir of Mosul, Sharaf al-Dawla Muslim ibn Quraysh al-ʿUqaylī, to desert the Seljūqs and strike a deal with the Fāṭimids, following a disagreement with the vizier of Malikshāh, Ibn Juhayr, over booty and war captives in Diyār Bakr in 1084 CE. According to Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, who provides unique information about Urtuq and Sharaf al-Dawla, Urtuq tried to convince Tutush to join them. However, after the death of Sharaf al-Dawla in a battle against Qutalmish in 1085 CE, the negotiations with the Fāṭimids stopped, but Urtuq continued to plunder the territories of Malikshāh. The latter attempted to come to terms with Urtuq by offering him money and gifts, which were refused. Later, Urtuq did cease his plundering, but announced that he would not rejoin Malikshāh because he could not

[192] Aḥmad ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-ʿAyān wa-Anbāʾ Abnāʾ al-Zamān*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), vol.1, 191.
[193] See ʿImād al-Dīn Khalīl, *al-Imārāt al-Urtuqīyah fī al-Jazīrah wa-al-Shām*; Claude Cahen, 'Artukids', *EI*^{2}.
[194] A.C.S. Peacock, *Early Seljūq History: A New Interpretation*, 60.
[195] Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Iran: Negotiating Ideology and Religious Inquiry* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 26-33.

trust the Sultan.[196] The rebellious nature of Urtuq's character becomes evident when we track his military adventures in Baḥrayn.

Another problematic issue is raised in the secondary literature by, for instance, al-Mudayris, al-Mullā and Khalīl. These authors state that the campaign was ordered by the Seljūq Sultan Malikshāh with the motive of defending Sunni Islam against Ismāʿīlsm in Baḥrayn, which formed a battlefield between the rival doctrines.[197]

However, the religious piety of the Seljūqs and their image as the upholders of Sunnism has proven a contentious question among scholars; the most recent among them being Omid Safi and Andrew Peacock. The former did not intend to question the personal piety of the Seljūqs, but rather to shed light on the function of the Seljūq's later biographers and their agendas. He argues that the Seljūqs not only deployed military forces to conquer and rule but also sponsored scholars and established religious institutions which in return legitimised their existence. This encouraged later chroniclers of the Seljūqs to portray the Sultans as pious because they needed to provide an example of 'ideal rulers' for their contemporary rulers who were unable to settle their countries and provide religious, social and political peace and security.[198] Peacock also rejects the conventional image of the Seljūqs or Turkmen as devout Sunnis, arguing that they were pragmatists who used various religious policies according to their own interests. He also presented numerous examples that help in reconsidering the conventional wisdom.[199] Although Deborah Tor advocates the conventional wisdom that deems the Seljūq Sultans as devout Sunnis on a personal level, who broke the Shīʿī political dominance in western Iran and Iraq, she concedes that these Sultans indeed offended the ʿAbbāsid Caliphs and were less enthusiastic about combating the Ismāʿīlīs in the late 11th and early 12th centuries than they were in fighting their own Turkmen rivals.[200]

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[196] ʿImād al-Dīn Khalīl, *al-Imārāt al-Urtuqīyah*, 57-65.

[197] Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 114-115, n.4; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fi'l-Baḥrayn*, 78; ʿAbdulraḥmān, al-Mullā, *Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya fī Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 148.

[198] Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Iran*, 7-8, 19.

[199] A.C.S. Peacock, *Early Seljūq History*, 99-129, 166-167. Andrew Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire*, 250-285.

[200] D.G. Tor, ''Sovereign and Pious': The Religious Life of the Great Seljūq Sultans' in *The Seljūqs: Politics, Society, and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Songul Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 39-62, esp.54-55.

The Turkmen campaigns appear more than simply been driven by Seljūq religious and political motives. In fact, there were four parties involved in the campaigns, with each party perhaps possessing its own agenda. The first was al-ʿUyūnī who requested military support. The second was the Turkmen chief Urtuq who aspired to attain territory and booty. The third was the Seljūqs, who likely sought to get rid of the ambitious Turkmen generals who might compete with them in the politics of Iraq, or simply because they could not control them.[201] Additionally, the Seljūqs were not interested in Baḥrayn—especially because the danger posed by the Qarāmiṭa had faded even before the Seljūq conquest of Iraq in 1055 CE. The fourth was the Caliph al-Muqtadī (r.1075-1094 CE), who perhaps sought to develop a direct and independent relationship with the Turkmen in order to balance the power of the Seljūq Sultans. Omid Safi characterises the interaction between the Caliphs and the Seljūq Sultans as a paradigm of negotiation and contestation of power.[202] Hanne highlights the growing socio-political power and the increasing autonomy of the late ʿAbbāsids among whom was the Caliph al-Muqtadī.[203] The *Sharḥ dīwān* reports that Urtuq went to the court of the Caliph [al-Muqtadī] and reported his preliminary achievements and victories against the Qarāmiṭa. The Caliph was glad for the report of Urtuq, and gave him gifts and praised his *jihād* against the Qarāmiṭa, whom he described as infidels.[204]

5. The Military Alliance between the ʿUyūnids and the Urtuqids against the Qarāmiṭa.

Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, quoting Ghars al-Niʿma (d.1088 CE), wrote that in *Rabīʿ al-Ākhar* 469 A.H (November 1076 CE), an army led by Urtuq Beg al-Turkumānī and his father Aksak[205] moved from its base at Ḥulwān to al-Baṣra, where the soldiers looted the city and its markets. They stayed there until *Rajab* (February 1077), and then marched to al-Qaṭīf to take revenge on Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās who had defeated Kajkīnā, the Seljūq *ḥājib* and his army.[206] However, Yaḥyā ibn

[201] Urtuq was transferred in 1079 CE to Syria to work alongside Tutush. See Claude Cahen, 'The Turkish Invasion: The Selchukids' in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. M. Setton (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), i, 158.
[202] Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Iran*, 35-42.
[203] Eric J. Hanne, *Putting the Caliph in His Place: Power, Authority, and the Late ʿAbbāsid Caliphate* (New Jersey: Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp., 2007), 103-108.
[204] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 964-966.
[205] The leader of the army is named Aksak Sallār and nicknamed Urtuq Beg. See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 961.
[206] See Chapter Two.

ʿAbbās fled al-Qaṭīf for Uwāl to avoid confronting the enormous Turkmen army, which was seemingly uninterested in al-Qaṭīf or Uwāl. The army marched for al-Aḥsāʾ, where it began by looting the villages and farms around the city before joining al-ʿUyūnī in the siege.

Together, they fought the Qarāmiṭa, the Yemenīs and the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā. The battle resulted in the withdrawal of the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā from al-Aḥsāʾ.[207] It may be understood from the sources that at this stage, the Qarāmiṭa lost their control over the outskirts of al-Aḥsāʾ and retreated to a fortress – called nowadays Qaṣr Quraymiṭ– where they and their allies barricaded themselves and were again besieged. The Turko-ʿUyūnid alliance had achieved most of its military goals.

The hot summer during the siege began with a lack of food supplies, especially because the Turkmen army had looted the surrounding villages and destroyed the farms which yielded crops. Their mission was not completely accomplished, since remnants of the Qarāmiṭa still occupied the fortress. The Turkmen reached an agreement with the Qarāmiṭa, who promised to pay a large ransom if the army lifted the siege and retreated for a month to allow them to collect the money. The Qarāmiṭa also gave the Turkmen thirteen men as hostages. However, when the Turkmen fulfilled their part of the deal and left the town, the Qarāmiṭa retrieved food from hidden places of storage and conveyed the supplies to their fortress, deceiving the Turkmen. They also refused to pay any of the promised money, anticipating that the Turkmen could not continue resisting the harsh weather with little food, and that they would withdraw from the siege.

Consequently, when the Turkmen realised that they had been tricked they responded by killing some of the Qarmāṭian hostages. Urtuq Beg decided that his army had to withdraw to Iraq, but also that he would leave his brother al-Bughūsh with two hundred soldiers to remain with ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī in the siege until he would return. Meanwhile, the Qarāmiṭa reassembled their allies, reunited with the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā and fought ʿAbdullāh al-ʿUyūnī and the small Turkmen army again. In a battle called al-Raḥlayn, the Qarāmiṭa and ʿĀmir Rabīʿā

[207] Anonoymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 960-967.

tribe were defeated by the ʿUyūnids and their allies in 470 A.H/1077 CE. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī entered the fortress and immediately made the *khuṭba* to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph.[208]

6. The Question of the Relationship between the Fāṭimid Caliph and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī.

Mājid, Madelung, Khalīl and al-Mudayris have linked ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī with the Ismāʿīlī Shīʿite's *daʿwā* and the Fāṭimid Caliph al-Mustanṣir. They base their hypothesis upon a letter sent by al-Mustanṣir to his vassal in Yemen, Aḥmad al-Mukarram al-Ṣulayḥī (see figure 9).[209] In the letter that was dated on *Rabīʿ al-Ākhar* 469 A.H/November 1076 C.E, al-Mustanṣir mentions the name of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī and his place of residence in al-Aḥsāʾ, describing or perhaps naming him as al-ʿAlawī. He praises him for fighting and defeating the *khawārij* (perhaps he meant the Qarāmiṭa, who had defected from the Fāṭimids), spreading al-Mustanṣir's *daʿwa* and accomplishing great tasks in the region. In the letter, al-Mustanṣir appoints ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī as a deputy of Aḥmad al-Mukarram and as the head of the *daʿwa* in the region of Baḥrayn. He also makes reference to earlier correspondences with al-ʿUyūnī that are not available to us. It is understood from the letter that ʿAbdullāh had already reported his victory to al-Mustanṣir.[210]

Khalīl accepts that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī was an Ismāʿīlī missionary in Baḥrayn; one of many similar Ismāʿīlī missionaries around the Islamic world at that time.[211] In contrast, al-Mudayris, despite also accepting the authenticity of the letter and the information it provides, offers a different interpretation. He suggests that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī was not really an adherent of the Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa*, but rather an ambitious Sunni political and military leader, who in order to achieve his goals sought support from various sources including the Fāṭimids in Egypt; he

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[208] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 960-967; Ibn al-Jawzī, 'Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-Aʿyān,' in *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, 247.
[209] W. Madelung, Ḳarmaṭī', *EI²*; ʿAbdulmunʿim Mājid, 'Siyāsat al-Fāṭimīyyīn fiʾl-Khalīj al-ʿArabī, Mustamadda min al-Sijillāt al-Mustanṣiriyya, Wathāʾiq Faṭimīyya Muʿāṣira,' in *al-Būhūth al-Muqaddama li-Muʾtamar Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya* (Doha, 1976), 408; Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 323-325; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 180; For information on the Ṣulayḥid kingdom see Ḥusain F. al-Hamdānī and Ḥasan al-Juhaynī, *Al-Ṣulayḥiyyūn wa-l-Ḥaraka al-Fāṭimīyya fiʾl-Yaman min sanat 268 A.H. ilā sanat 626 A.H.* (Ṣanʿāʾ: Manshūrāt al-Madīna, 1986)
[210] ʿAbdulmunʿim Mājid, *al-Sijillāt al-Mustanṣiriyya* (Miṣr: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 1954), 179 (letter number 54).
[211] Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 335.

exploited the Fāṭimid-Qarmāṭian schism by offering himself as an alternative, and presented himself as a devout Ismāʿīlī missionary.[212]

However, I am skeptical about such a connection with the Fāṭimids for four reasons. First, we do not see in *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* any indication of or reference to a relationship between the ʿUyūnids and the Ismāʿīlīs in Egypt or Yemen, or even any Ismāʿīlī ideology. Second, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī mentioned the name of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph in the *khuṭba*, not the Fāṭimid Caliph, with whom he allegedly corresponded. Third, the Egyptian historian Ibn Taghrī Bardī (d.1470 CE) in his book, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, in the year 470/1077 which was the 43rd year of al-Mustanṣir al-Fāṭimī's rule, states that 'the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Muqtadī received a letter from Urtuq Beg informing him that they had taken the Qarāmiṭa's land.'[213] If this letter is authentic then why did not the historian record the name of al-ʿUyūnī? Fourth, and more importantly, I am skeptical about the authenticity of the letter.

Ḥusain Fayḍuallāh al-Hamdānī obtained from an Ismāʿīlī Buhrī priest in India (perhaps in the early 1930s) a collection of Fāṭimid letters and decrees (*sijillāt*), most of which are allegedly issued and written by the Caliph al-Mustanṣir bi-Allāh and were preserved in the archive of the *daʿwāt* of Yemen and India. Al-Hamdānī received them in the form of a modern manuscript, which is devoid of the date of copying, the name of the copyist and does not even look ancient. Al-Hamdānī wrote a brief report about its contents and its importance to the history of al-Mustanṣir in the late Fāṭimid Caliphate and the short-lived Ṣulayḥid Kingdom in Yemen. Al-Hamdānī did not focus in his report on the authenticity of these letters, except to indicate that a number of them were probably a source for the autobiography written by the Ismāʿīlī missionary al-Muʾayyad fiʾl-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d.470/1077), and for the seventh volume of *ʿUyūn al-akhbār* written by the missionary Idrīs ʿImād al-Dīn (d.1468 CE), who quoted several letters of this collection.[214] He also suggests that these letters may have reached India in two phases: the first phase was when a considerable body of Fāṭimid literature was transferred from Egypt to Yemen by Lamak ibn Mālik (d.1142 CE), the judge and emissary of the Ṣulayḥid king, who served at al-

[212] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 181.
[213] Abū al-Maḥāsin ibn Taghrī Bardī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusain Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1992), vol.5, 106.
[214] See Al-Muʾayyad fi al-Dīn, *Sīrat al-Muʾayyad fī al-Dīn Dāʿī al-Duʿāt*, ed. Muḥammad Kāmil Ḥusain (al-Qāhira: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī, 1949); Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, Paul E. Walker and Alex Pomerantz, *The Fatimids and their Successors: The History of an Islamic Community: Idris ʿImad al-Din's ʿUyun al-Akhbar* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002)

Mustanṣir's court for several years before returning to Yemen. The second phase occurred after the decline of the Ṣulayḥid Kingdom (1037-1138 CE), when the *daʿwā* became separated from politics and the Ismāʿīlī literature was transferred to India by a secret Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* organization.[215]

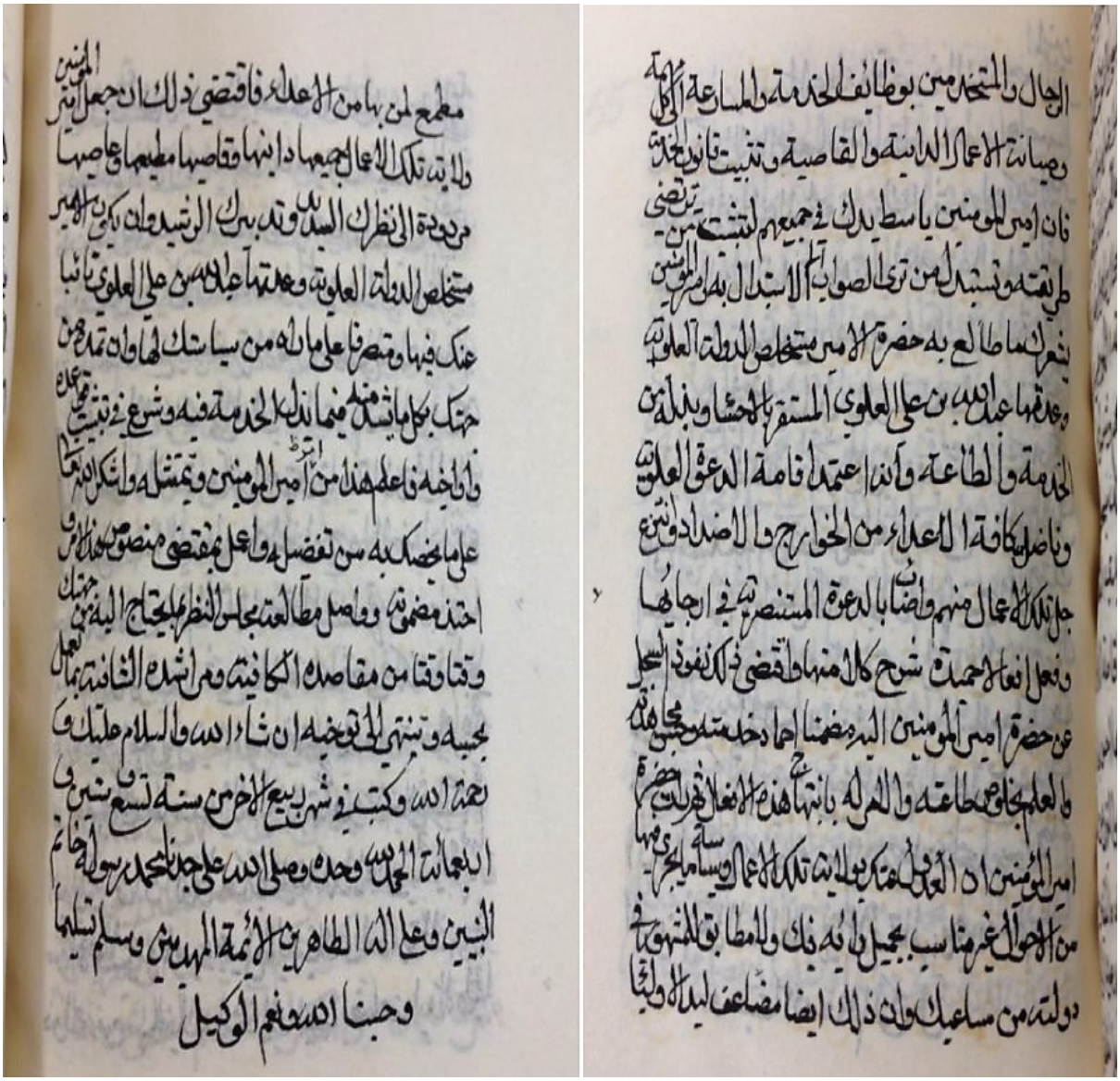

Figure 9: Parts of al-Mustanṣir's letter to the Ṣulayḥid king. The name of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī and the date of the letter (*Rabīʿ al-Ākhar* 469/ November 1076 C.E) are evident.

[215] Ḥusain F. al-Hamdānī, 'The Letters of Al-Mustanṣir bi'llāh', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 7 (1934): 307-324. The manuscript is preserved now in the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies under the number: 27155. The letter is given the sheets numbers 145-148 (each number for two pages).

The full text of this collection of letters was edited and published in 1954 by ʿAbdulmunʿim Mājid. Although he denies their attribution to al-Mustanṣir, he confirms that they at least belong to the Fāṭimid chancery. This is based on a number of indicators, such as the resemblance of their writing style and phraseology to other Fāṭimid documents, the consistency of the Caliph's and his relatives' epithets and titles with those used in other Fāṭimid letters and archaeological objects, and the correspondence between the historical facts given in the letters with what is already known from other sources.[216]

Nevertheless, the letter's authenticity would seem to be problematic given the inconsistency between the date of the ʿUyūnid victory and the date of the letter. The date of the letter under discussion, which mentions ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī and blesses his victory against the *khawārij* (presumably the Qarāmiṭa), is given as *Rabīʿ al-Ākhar* 469 A.H/November 1076 C.E. This date was three months before the date provided by Ghars al-Niʿma (d.1088 CE), Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī and *Sharḥ dīwān,* who wrote that the Turkmen army left al-Baṣra for al-Qaṭīf in *Rajab* 469 A.H/ (February 1077), and after some time it marched to al-Aḥsāʾ to join al-ʿUyūnī in the siege of the Qarāmiṭa. The victory of the ʿUyūnids was achieved in the summer of 1077 CE.[217]

Accordingly, how could al-Mustanṣir celebrate the victory at least six months before it occurred? Furthermore, this leaves aside the fact that the letter was al-Mustanṣir's reply to a previous correspondence in which al-ʿUyūnī reported his victory, implying that the conquest must have occurred even before *Rabīʿ al-Ākhar* 469/ November 1076 C.E. We cannot rely on a modern manuscript of uncertain provenance and thereby discard the dates provided in the primary sources: *Mirʾāt al-zamān* of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (d.1258 CE), who quoted Ghars al-Niʿma (d.1088 CE); and *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī* (1230s CE), which also relied on earlier authority.

[216] ʿAbdulmunʿim Mājid, *al-Sijillāt al-Mustanṣiriyya*, 11-19.
[217] Ibn al-Jawzī, 'Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-Aʿyān,' in *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, 247; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 962.

7. The Formative Period of the Emirate under ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī.

Following the conquest of al-Aḥsāʾ and the establishment of his emirate, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī faced many political obstacles and military confrontations with both local Baḥraynī and regional powers. It took him approximately ten years to overcome all of his enemies. The local were the remnants of the Qarāmiṭa, the local tribes, such as ʿĀmir Rabīʿā, some people of al-Aḥsāʾ who were loyal to the Qarāmiṭa, and the rival emirate of Ibn ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. The wider regional powers were represented by the Turkmen chiefs in Iraq, such as the previous ally, the Urtuqid family (Urtuq, Aksak, al-Bughūsh and Rukn al-Dawla), Khamārtakīn al-Tutushī and a leader described as al-Qārūtī. The available sources do not provide us with the dates of every confrontation and battle. Therefore, we are compelled to use the given dates to deduce those that are unknown, or at least to determine the order of events.

In the summer of 1077, al-ʿUyūnī entered the castle of al-Aḥsāʾ, and thereby gained apparent control of the city. He spared the lives of the Qarāmiṭa and the Yemenīs and allowed them to reside in al-Aḥsāʾ. Nonetheless, the Qarāmiṭa did not give up completely; they made contact again with the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā and beseeched them to fight al-ʿUyūnī again. ʿĀmir Rabīʿā, before attacking the new emir, demanded that al-ʿUyūnī pays them the money which they used to receive from the previous rulers (i.e. the Qarāmiṭa) for permitting and protecting the passage of caravans. However, al-ʿUyūnī refused and consequently he fought the final battle in 470/1077-8 against this tribe and the remnants of the Qarāmiṭa in a place between the rivers of Muḥallim and Sulaysil. The ʿUyūnids and the Turkmen defeated and killed a large number of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā's men and took their spoils. The booty was four thousand camels together with their herders and some horses which al-ʿUyūnī shared with his soldiers and the Turkmen. Al-ʿUyūnī released the women and children of his defeated foes and prevented the Turkmen from taking them.[218]

[218] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 968-969.

7.1 The Conflict between al-ʿUyūnī and the Urtuqids.

After the victory of the ʿUyūnids over the Qarāmiṭa and ʿĀmir Rabīʿā in 1077/8, they turned against their allies, the Urtuqid Turkmen. This reversal had begun earlier with the refusal of al-ʿUyūnī to allow al-Bughūsh and the Turkmen to enter the castle with him: a symbolic expression of his position as the highest authority in al-Aḥsāʾ. He perhaps felt that the Turkmen were intending to act as the masters of al-Aḥsāʾ. Al-ʿUyūnī imprisoned al-Bughūsh then killed him.[219] Neither the date of this event nor details of what happened to the rest of the army is mentioned in our sources. It probably occurred immediately after the battle of Muḥallim and Sulaysil (1077/8 CE), and before the subsequent expedition of Khamārtakīn al-Tutushī in *c*.1079 CE.

It is important to understand the reason behind the cooperation between the Turkmen and al-ʿUyūnī against the Qarāmiṭa. It is apparent that the relationship between them was one of convenience, as each tried to use the other for their own agenda. Once they eliminated their common enemy, conflict began. It seems that the Turkmen considered themselves as the conquerors and the new rulers of al-Aḥsāʾ. The commentator of the *dīwān* writes that al-Bughūsh attempted to impose himself on al-ʿUyūnī as overlord and that this led al-ʿUyūnī to kill him.[220]

The author of *Sharḥ dīwān* states that Urtuq Beg, apparently before the murder of his brother in al-Aḥsāʾ in *c*.1078/9, attended the court of the Caliph [al-Muqtadī r.1075-1094 CE] and reported the preliminary achievements of the campaign; the Caliph granted him gifts.[221] Urtuq Beg did not mention anything in respect of al-ʿUyūnī and in his *tawqīʿ* (decree) to Urtuq, the Caliph did not praise or reward or appoint al-ʿUyūnī to any office or even mentioned his name. Al-ʿUyūnī was completey disregarded. Another source confirms this; Ibn Taghrī Bardī states that 'the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Muqtadī received a letter from Urtuq Beg informing him that they had taken the Qarāmiṭa's land.'[222]

It is obvious that Urtuq projected himself as the sole protagonist and neglected mentioning al-ʿUyūnī, which unmasks his intentions and also provides a reason for the absence of al-ʿUyūnī in the chronicles of that period. What is also interesting is that Urtuq Beg met or

[219] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 978.
[220] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 978.
[221] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 963.
[222] Abū al-Maḥāsin ibn Taghrī Bardī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, vol.5, 106.

contacted the Caliph directly, instead of contacting the Seljūq Sultan. This on the one hand suggests that the Seljūqs had nothing to do with this military campaign, and on the other hand, that this Turkmen family sought to be somehow independent from the Seljūqs by following their own agenda and seeking legitimacy directly from the Caliph.

Unfortunately, we have no information regarding whether al-ʿUyūnī continued to mention the name of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph in the *khuṭba* after the murder of al-Bughūsh, the brother of Urtuq. It is likely that al-ʿUyūnī ceased to do so and began to rule independently.

7.2 The Turkmen's Further Expeditions to Baḥrayn.

In addition to the expedition of Kajkīna and Urtuq Beg, Baḥrayn received three from Khamārtakīn, al-Qārūtī and Rukn al-Dawla. All of these Turkmen invasion attempts were thwarted by the ʿUyūnid Emirate.

Regarding Khamārtakīn's expedition, which is the third of the Turkmen's expeditions, the author of *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* reports a brief and vague sentence. He states that a massive army was sent by Khamārtakīn via the route of al-Baṣra, and arrived at al-Aḥsāʾ.[223] We possess no additional information about what then occurred and how the army failed in this mission. However, the campaign was apparently not influential, as its events did not become famous enough to be recorded or transmitted down to the author's time.

From other sources, we know that Khamārtakīn al-Tutushī (d.508/1114) was a slave of Tāj al-Dawla Tutush ibn Alp Arslān (d.1095 CE). He then worked for the Seljūq Sultan Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh, enjoying significant influence and acquiring substantial quantities of money and properties. He was also appointed as guarantor/tenant, *ḍāmin*, in al-Baṣra in 472/1079; the holder of such a position guaranteed that he would send a certain amount of money per annum to the Sultan. The amount promised by Khamārtakīn was one hundred thousand dinars in addition to one hundred horses.[224]

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[223] The author says: 'وكان قد سبقه إليها ملك آخر في عسكر عظيم سائراً إليها على طريق البصرة من جهة خمارتكين' see Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 974.

[224] Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa-l-Umam* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1358 [1939]), vol.8, 323; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.2, 15.

By using these pieces of information, we might suggest the context in which the army from al-Baṣra was sent. Khamārtakīn probably wanted to fulfill the financial conditions of his position as a *ḍāmin* or to increase his budget, by invading the region close to his city.[225]

The fourth Turkmen invasion attempt occurred in 1081 CE. The *Sharḥ dīwān* reports that an army led by al-Qārūtī, who is described as a ruler and a former chief judge in the country of Qārūt Beg, accompanied by some unknown emirs (perhaps referring to army commanders), arrived near al-Aḥsāʾ. This is a strange combination of positions held by al-Qārūtī, but we have no further information about his identity. The source adds that this judge/ruler was relocated to work in the *dīwān* after Aksak Sallār (the father of Urtuq) left Iraq for Syria. This means that this warrior judge began his march to Baḥrayn from Iraq.

Upon the arrival of the army, al-ʿUyūnī decided not to fight, but to receive and welcome them; however he did not allow them to enter the castle. Al-ʿUyūnī's plan, according to the source, was to convince the Turkmen that there was a wealthy region very close to his domain called Oman, where they could find plenty of gold, silver and other forms of wealth. At the same time, he contacted a nomadic tribe called Banū al-Khārijiyya (not to be confused with the Kharijites sect), who were living in the desert between Oman and Baḥrayn (probably the Empty Quarter), and asked them to guide the Turkmen along the route to Oman and then leave them in the middle of the desert to die of starvation. Unfortunately the author of our source is more concerned with depicting the clever trick played by al-ʿUyūnī than with specifying the identity of the invaders and the context of the invasion.[226]

Al-Janbī suggests that the commentator means by *bilād Qārūt Beg* the region of Kirmān in southeast Iran. Kirmān was ruled by Qawūrd of Kirmān d. 466/1074, the brother of Alp Arslān and uncle of Malikshāh).[227] However, there is no indication of such an invasion in the book of *Tārīkh-e Afḍal* by Kirmānī (died at the beginning of the 7th/13th century), who wrote a history of the Seljūqs of Kirmān. It is also difficult to believe that the chef of judges, who was serving in Kirmān under Qarūt Beg, did not know about Oman, because Oman was already

[225] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 974.
[226] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 973-977.
[227] Urtuq went to serve under Tutush ibn Alp Arslān and then received al-Quds as an *iqtāʿ* (land grant) in 1079 CE. See ʿImād al-Dīn Khalīl, *Al-Imārāt al-Urtuqīyah fī al-Jazīrah wa-al-Shām*, 59, 65; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 974 n.962.

under the rule of Qawūrd and his descendants.[228] If we consider the story to be reliable, this Turkmen campaign was the fourth and penultimate in a series of five Turkmen military attempts to occupy Baḥrayn after Kajkīnā, Urtuq, and Khamārtakīn; it was shortly followed by that of Rukn al-Dawla of the Urtuqid family.

The fifth Turkmen expedition was launched by the Urtuqid family led by Rukn al-Dawla. Al-ʿUyūnī's betrayal of the Turkmen and his murder of al-Bughūsh provoked the Urtuqid family. They belatedly responded by sending a military campaign to al-Aḥsāʾ in *c*.1087 CE to take revenge and subjugate the region. The army consisted of two thousand soldiers led by Rukn al-Dawla. The *Sharḥ dīwān* does not clarify the identity of Rukn al-Dawla. Al-Janbī suggests that he was Dāwūd ibn Suqmān ibn Urtuq al-Turkumānī, Urtuq's grandson. The army which received cooperation from some residents of al-Aḥsāʾ, perhaps loyal to the Qarāmiṭa, besieged the fortress of al-ʿUyūnī and his family for a year.

When the siege failed to force al-ʿUyūnī to surrender, Rukn al-Dawla offered to leave the city if al-ʿUyūnī would give them his eldest son ʿAlī as an indemnity for the murder of his father's uncle al-Bughūsh. A poetic verse and its commentary inform that the son, without his father's knowledge or permission, turned himself over to the Turkmen in order to save his father's emirate. The army left the city and ʿAlī was taken to Kirmān and was imprisoned there. After some time, he managed to escape and return to al-Aḥsāʾ.[229] This campaign was the Urtuqids' last attempt to occupy Baḥrayn.

7.3 Corrections to Modern Historians' Identification of the Turkmen Chiefs.

Our source, *Sharḥ dīwān*, can occasionally be difficult to read, not because the anonymous author writes in a very elevated form of Arabic, but rather because of the opposite. At times he writes in a language that is close to colloquial, and hence unclear. It is unusual to see a text which is intended to be a commentary on a collection of poetry, but which occasionally contains such vague and ambiguous terms as to make it difficult for the reader to recognise the references

[228] See Afḍal al-Dīn Kirmānī, *Tārīkh-e Afḍal yā Badāʾiʿ al-Azmān fī Waqāʾiʿ Kirmān*, ed. Mahdī Bayānī (Tehrān: Intishārāt-e Dānishgāh-e Tehrān, 1326[1948]), 8-10.
[229] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 978 n.970, 996-998, 1038-1039.

and pronouns.[230] This has caused a problem for historians seeking to construct a chronological narrative for the history of the ʿUyūnids, especially in the formative period. The following will correct parts of modern historians' narrative regarding incorrect details on both the number of the Turkmen campaigns and the identities of the Turkmen chiefs: Rukn al-Dawla, Khamārtakīn and al-Qārūtī.

Khalīl confuses three Turkmen leaders who shared the name Khamārtakīn; he believed them to be the same person. Additionally, he did not know about the fourth individual, who al-Janbī suggests to have been the actual besieger of al-Aḥsāʾ: Rukn al-Dawla Dāwūd ibn Sukmān (the grandson of Urtuk Beg).[231] Khalīl names the leader Rukn al-Dawla as Khamārtakīn al-Ṭughrāʾī. The three individuals whose identity he conflates are: first, Rukn al-Dawla Khamārtakīn al-Ṭughrāʾī who died in 454/1062, before the rise of the ʿUyūnid emirate, who was an important army commander who worked for Ṭughril Beg and killed al-Basāsīrī;[232] second, Rukn al-Dawla Qatlagh Takīn (not Khamārtakīn as stated by Khalīl), who governed the region of Fārs for the Sultan Malikshāh in 466/1074;[233] third, Khamārtakīn al-Tutushī who died in 508/1114, an army commander and governor who served Sultan Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh as *ḍāmin* in al-Baṣra in 472/1079, whom I believe to be the one meant in the *Sharḥ dīwān*.[234] Khalīl mistakenly understood that the campaign came from Fārs, because Malikshāh gave the governorship of Fārs to his leader Qatlagh Takīn, not Khamārtakīn; this is written in the source which he cites, *Akhbār al-dawla al-Saljūqiyya*,[235] He therefore conflates the three campaigns and leaders, depicting them as one.[236] However if the campaign originated from Fārs, this means that it was either a naval invasion of the western coast of the Gulf and then a march to the city of al-Aḥsāʾ, or else that he took a very long overland route from Fārs that crossed Iraq and came finally to al-Aḥsāʾ, which is unreasonable.

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[230] An example of his vague and ambiguous sentences is this:' وكان قد سبقه إليها ملك آخر في عسكر عظيم سائراً إليها على طريق البصرة من جهة خمارتكين' see Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 974.
[231] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 978, n.970.
[232] ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fiʾl-Tārīkh*, vol.8, 358.
[233] Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Ḥussainī, *Akhbār al-Dawla al-Saljūqiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Iqbāl (Lahore: The University of Punjāb, 1933), 58.
[234] ʿAbdulraḥmān ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol.8, 323; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.2, 15.
[235] Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Ḥussainī, *Akhbār al-Dawla al-Saljūqiyya*, 58.
[236] Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 132-140.

Al-Mudayris also mistakes the identity of Rukn al-Dawla, although his assumption differs from Khalīl's. He gives him the epithet Rukn al-Dīn despite the fact that it is written in our source *Sharḥ dīwān* as Rukn al-Dawla. He suggests that this individual was Rukn al-Dīn Sulṭānshāh, who was the ruler of Kirmān from 467-477/1074-1084. He also merges the campaigns of Rukn al-Dawla and al-Qārūtī, whereas they were in fact separate.[237]

7.4 The Subjugation of the whole Region of Baḥrayn under ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī.

The main cities not yet ruled by al-ʿUyūnī were al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. These agricultural and seaport towns were under the rule of Zikrī ibn Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbbās, who aspired to expand his territory by subjugating al-Aḥsāʾ and halting the political ambitions of his rival ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī. Zikrī used both military and political means to further his purpose. He attempted to bribe a number of ʿUyūnī emirs to gain their loyalty and to break the solidarity of the ʿUyūnid family, but without success.[238]

The dates of this war and its many military confrontations are not specified in our source *Sharḥ dīwān*. The conflict may have occurred in the 1080s CE, during the early period of the emirate. The two armies met several times in minor battles that did not have serious consequences. It was the battle of Nāẓira which led to successive battles all of which were against Zikrī. The battle of Nāẓira began when Zikrī marched with his army to occupy al-Aḥsāʾ, but was defeated at Nāẓira. The remnants of the army, including Zikrī, fled to Uwāl and were pursued by al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, who defeated them second time. Eventually, Zikrī fled to al-ʿUqayr in a final attempt to save his emirate. There, he gathered a force of Bedouins and attacked al-Qaṭīf which was lost to the ʿUyūnids, but was for the third and final time defeated by ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī. Consequently, al-ʿUyūnī became the sole ruler of the primary Baḥraynī towns: al-Aḥsāʾ, al-Qaṭīf and the island of Uwāl.[239]

[237] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 95-96.
[238] See Chapter Two for more details about the emirate of Ibn ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl.
[239] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 979-981.

8. The Tribes of Baḥrayn and the Emergence of the ʿUqaylids.

Before discussing the emergence of the ʿUqaylids as political and military players in Baḥrayn, an important note regarding the demographic map of the region of Baḥrayn should be addressed here in brief. In addition to the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays, the region of Baḥrayn from the mid-fourth to the ninth centuries CE was inhabited by the tribes of Bakr ibn Wāʾil and Tamīm, and by other smaller tribes, such as Taghlib and al-Azd.[240] During the ʿUyūnīd era, the tribes of Wāʾil and Tamīm were almost completely absent from the scene, and almost nothing related to them in Baḥrayn is mentioned in our source *Sharḥ dīwān*. This suggests a mass migration from the region, perhaps westwards to Najd and central Arabia, and to the north, to the desert of Iraq and Syria. They may also have merged with other powerful tribes and adopted their tribal names, which was not an unusual practice in nomadic and tribal societies. The date of this mass emigration or integration into other tribes is difficult to track, but it is likely that it occurred during the Qarmāṭian era, and coincided with the arrival or emergence of the tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿā in Baḥrayn, who perhaps defeated the tribes of Bakr and Tamīm in the region and occupied their pastures in the tenth century.

After the defeat of ʿĀmir Rabīʿa in the battle of al-Muḥallim and Sulaysil in 1077/8 CE, the tribe was either extinguished or left the region. Shortly afterwards, there arrived another branch of the tribe called Banū ʿUqayil, led by Ghufayla ibn Shabāna.[241] Al-Janbī was the first to propose this view. He and his collegues distinguished the tribal branch of Āmir Rabīʿa from the tribal branch of Banū ʿUqayl.[242] Although both of these branches belonged to the mother tribe ʿĀmir ibn Ṣaʿṣaʿa, they were the offspring of different grandsons of ʿĀmir ibn Ṣaʿṣaʿa; ʿĀmir (whose offspring were the allies of the Qarāmiṭa and were defeated in 1077/8) and Kaʿb (father of ʿUqayl, whose offspring became the new political players in Baḥrayn and will be called the ʿUqaylids or Banū ʿUqayl). The author of *Sharḥ dīwān* writes that the geneology of the expelled tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿa was: ʿAwf ibn ʿĀmir ibn Rabīʿa ibn ʿĀmir ibn Ṣaʿṣaʿa ibn Muʿāwiya ibn Bakr ibn Hawāzin ibn Manṣūr ibn ʿIkrima ibn Khasfa ibn Qays ʿAaylān ibn Muḍar ibn Nizār.[243]

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[240] See ʿAbdulraḥmān al-ʿĀnī, *al-Baḥrayn fī Ṣadr al-Islām* (Beirut: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Mawsūʿāt, 2000)
[241] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1011, 1016.
[242] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1013, n.1120.
[243] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 958.

Nothing is known regarding the whereabouts of the tribal branch of ʿUqayl before its emergence onto the political and military scene of the region of Baḥrayn. They had either a) lived already in Baḥrayn but had been inactive and overshadowed by more powerful tribes; b) they had migrated from central Arabia, the place of origin of Nizārī Arabs; c) they had arrived from the desert of south Iraq; or d) it is possible, although less likely, that they had come from north Iraq after the fall of the ʿUqaylid polity (990-1095 CE), because both the founder of the ʿUqaylid polity in north Iraq Muḥammad ibn al-Musayyab,[244] and the leader of the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn, Ghufayla ibn Shabāna meet genealogically in the latter's tenth ancestor; ʿUqayl ibn Kaʿb, which suggests that they were not close relatives.[245] The ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn may have come from southern Iraq, where several nomadic tribes belonging to ʿUqayl existed, such as ʿIbāda, al-Muntafiq and Khafāja. These tribes were genealogically the closest tribes to the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn whom the author of *Sharḥ dīwān* names, sometimes, the al-Qadīmāt, after Ghufayla's grandfather Qadīma ibn Nabāta of ʿUqayl.[246] Chapter Five will discuss in greater detail the ʿUqaylids and their polity in Baḥrayn (1230s-1400 CE).

The ʿUqaylids' initial raids and plundering began in the later period of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī's reign, when his authority was weakened. They led a number of smaller tribes called *al-aḥlāf* (the confederated tribes), Qibāth and Nāʾila.[247] They exploited the weakness of the polity after the death of most of its powerful *fursān* militants/knights and looted the farms of al-Aḥsāʾ for six years. The emirate's army could not offer protection to the farmers and landlords, who agreed to pay one third of their production to the Bedouins in order to stop their attacks.[248]

9. The Reign of al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī in the Life of his Father.

Al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī contributed considerably to the consolidation of the power of the new emirate. His father appointed him as governor in al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. His policy aimed at

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[244] Muḥammad ibn al-Musayyib's name was: محمد بن المسيب بن رافع بن المقلد بن جعفر بن عمرو بن المهنا بن عبدالرحمن بن بريد بن عبدالله بن زيد بن قيس بن جوثة بن طهفة بن حزن بن عقيل بن كعب بن بن ربيعة بن عامر بن صعصعة. See Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān wa-Anbāʾ Abnāʾ al-Zamān* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), vol.5, 260.

[245] Ghufayla's name was: غفيلة بن شبانة بن قديمة بن نبانة بن عامر بن عوف بن مالك بن ربيعة بن عوف بن عامر بن عقيل بن كعب بن ربيعة بن عامر بن صعصعة. See Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106-107.

[246] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1163-1164.

[247] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1012.

[248] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1030-1032.

expelling the former tribe of ʿĀmir Rabīʿa from the entire region. In order to do that, he forbade the Bedouin from pasturing in the area from Thāj (180 km north of al-Aḥsāʾ) to al-Raml (described as an area on the way to Oman in the south; perhaps al-Ṣummān Valley). Our source informs us that al-Faḍl rarely settled in a town, spending most of his time in the deserts. He assumed this lifestyle in order to fight the Bedouin and to protect the Baḥraynī towns from their raids. His reign lasted for fourteen years. He made al-Qaṭīf his capital *dār al-mulk* for seven years, before transferring it to Uwāl. He was later killed by his servant in Tārūt, al-Qaṭīf.[249] Our source does not present any dates for these events. Yet, they may have been during the late period of his father's life.

The date of the death of the first ʿUyūnid emir ʿAbdullāh is also unclear. His reign lasted for an exceptionally long time.[250] The appendix of the *Sharḥ dīwān*, which constitutes a summary and a list of the rulers of the ʿUyūnid emirate, states that he ruled for sixty years: that is, from his victory over the Qarāmiṭa (which occurred in 470/1077) until his death, which may therefore have occurred in about 530/1135/6.[251]

10. The Reign of Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī.

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī appointed his grandson Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī as heir after the murder of his son al-Faḍl.[252] We have no idea as to why ʿAbdullāh did so given that a number of his sons were still living. Was he intending to establish a father-to-son hereditary system for the throne? Or was there a practical issue regarding his remaining sons' inadequacies as leaders? Whatever the reason may have been, it seems that his sons (al-Ḥasan and ʿAlī) were unsatisfied with their father's decision to appoint his grandson as heir and dismiss their claim. This decision perhaps meant that the emirate's system of succession would in future be hereditary from father to son, not the more usual tradition of brother-to-brother succession;

[249] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 110-112, vol.2, 1000, 1108-1109.
[250] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1030.
[251] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.
[252] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.

hence neither they, nor their offspring, would possess the opportunity or the right to rule.[253] This would cause a serious crisis for the future of the ʿUyūnid ruling family as will be shown below.

Abū Sinān moved the capital to al-Qaṭīf. He marginalised his uncles by not appointing them to any administrative positions, perhaps due to his concerns that they might use their power against him. At the same time, he designated one of his uncle's sons, Abū Muqaddam Shukr ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, as a governor of al-Aḥsāʾ, probably to gain his loyalty and divide his potential enemies. Unfortunately, we have no information on these dates. Al-Mudayris suggests that Abū Sinān shifted the capital to al-Qaṭīf for two reasons: first, al-Qaṭīf was the town where his father had ruled and he may have been raised and lived there for most of his life. Second, he wished to be distant from his dissatisfied and perhaps disloyal uncles.[254]

Battles occurred during Abū Sinān's reign, primarily against the ʿUqaylids. The first was the battle of al-Qaṭīf, fought against a coalition of Bedouins led by the sheikh of the ʿUqaylids, Ghufayla ibn Shabāna, who was defeated by Abū Sinān. Accounts of this battle say that Abū Sinān warned Ghufayla against pasturing his herds in the farms of al-Qaṭīf. However, Ghufayla did not comply and went with his tribe to al-Qaṭīf where they fought Abū Sinān; the latter was almost killed, but survived, and the Bedouin army retreated.[255] The second battle was between the governor of the city, Abū Muqaddam Shukr ibn ʿAlī, and the ʿUqaylids led by Ḥammād al-Nāʾilī and al-Subayʿ ibn Ghufayla ibn Shabāna. It took place in the surrounding area of al-Aḥsāʾ. It was called the battle of al-Khāʾis (the foul-smelling, because of the large number of dead bodies). It occurred one month after the Bedouins' raids on al-Aḥsāʾ: Abū Muqaddam eventually defeated the Bedouins, although with great difficulty, and killed their leaders.[256]

The appendix of the *Sharḥ dīwān* reports that the emir Abū Sinān was killed by his uncles, ʿAlī and al-Ḥasan. It does not offer any additional information on how and when, but it says that Abū Sinān ruled al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl for about eighteen years, meaning that his death

[253] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mullā, *Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya*, 169-170.
[254] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 108.
[255] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 661, vol.2, 1011-1012.
[256] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1012-1015.

might have occurred in *c*.1152 CE.[257] We do not see any reference to the story of his death in the poetry or its commentary.

Modern historians envisage that Abū Sinān's murder occurred during the battle of al-Aḥsāʾ, in which even his cousin Abū Muqaddam turned against him.[258] They base this assumption the presence of the tombs of Abū Sinān and his brother Jaʿfar in al-Aḥsāʾ, as informs the *Sharḥ dīwān*.[259] They assume, without showing a separation between what the source actually says and their interpretation, that the uncles, ʿAlī and al-Ḥasan, together with Abū Muqaddam ibn ʿAlī, allied with the ʿUqaylids and their leader Ghufayla and waged a war against Abū Sinān which resulted in his murder.

During Abū Sinān's reign, the economy seems to have improved. Signs of this may be observed in the construction of a minaret for the Masjid al-Khamīs in Uwāl and the attractiveness of his court to Iraqi poets. The name of Abū Sinān appears in the book of *Dhayl tārīkh Baghdād* by Ibn al-Najjār (1245 CE) and *Kharīdat al-qaṣr*, in which two poets from Iraq are reported to have visited Baḥrayn, in order to panegyrise the King Abū Sinān. They were ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Tamīmī al-ʿAnbarī (1128 CE), and Ḥusām al-Dawla Muḥammad ibn al-Mughīth al-Ḥanafī.[260] This will be disussed in detail in Chapter Six.

Two insciptions related to Abū Sinān exist in Masjid al-Khamīs in Bilād al-Qadīm in Uwāl. This mosque, as described in Chapter One has two minarets. They reveal the name of the emir. One of them features the name of the official who ordered the construction of the mosque and contain phrases that suggest the religious affiliation of the builder, which is Twelverism.

The first inscription, on a slab of limestone, is located on the entrance door of the western minaret (see figure 10). Belgrave found it difficult to decipher, although he was able to read a number of words and phrases, such as the Shīʿite version of the *shahāda* and the twelve names of the Twelver Shīʿites' Imāms, including the name of al-Ḥujja.[261] It is indeed hard to read. The

[257] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.
[258] ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 110-111; Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 167-168.
[259] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 661, vol.2, 1002-1003, 1012.
[260] Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAbdulqādir ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), vol.19, 7-9; ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: Dār al-Ḥuriyya li-ʾl-Tibāʿa, 1973), vol.2, section 4, 708.
[261] James Belgrave, *Welcome to Bahrain*, 86.

archaeologist Ludvik Kalus from the French Archaeological mission was the first to publish almost the entire text of the inscription with the help of a team of Arab archaeologists.[262] According to them, the inscription reads as follows:[263]

(1) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول [الله]

(2) علي ولي الله هذا من فضل ربي ليبلوني أشكر أم أكفر مما أمر ببنائه

(3) معالي بن الحسن بن علي بن حماد العبد المطيع الفقير إلى الله سبح اللـ[ـه]

(4) ومحمد وعلي وفاطمة والحسن والحسين وعلي ومحمد وجعفر وامو[سى]

(5) وعلي ومحمد وعلي والحسن والحجة المنتظر صلوات الله عليهم ابتـ[غاء] لـxxx

(6) Xxx الله (؟) و (؟) راجيا ثوابه في أيام الملك الفاضل أبو عبدالله محمد بن الفضل أعزه الله سنة ثمان عشر وخمس مائة

(7) Xxx وصلى الله (؟) xxx

(1) In the name of God the compassionate the merciful, there is no god but God and Muḥammad is the messenger of God

(2) ʿAlī is the friend of God, 'this is by the Grace of my Lord to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful', this is built upon the order of

(3) Maʿālī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥammād, the poor dutiful servant of God, Praised G[od]

(4) And Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusain, ʿAlī, Muḥammad, Jaʿfar and Mū[sā]

(5) And ʿAlī, Muḥammad, ʿAlī, al-Ḥasan and the awaited al-Ḥujja, peace be upon them for the desire of xxx

(6) xxx God (?) and (?) wishing God's reward, in the reign of the good king Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl may God glorify him, in the year of five hundred and eighteen

(7) xxx God bless (?) xxx

Here, we read that the mosque, or perhaps the minaret, was built by Maʿālī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥammād. We do not possess any information about this figure. Kalus wonders why he did not hold a title.[264] Ḥusain suggests that he was a religious leader who was involved, with

[262] Ḥusain Muḥammad Ḥusain, *Masjid al-Khamīs*, 39.

[263] Two different versions of the text are provided by Kalus in two of his publications; they vary in terms of the sequence of the lines, perhaps as a result of an error. He places line number five before line number four in this work: Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 18-19; but he puts it in the correct order in this work: Ludvik Kalus, 'La mosquée al-Khamis à Bahrain: II.,', 54.

[264] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 19.

his offspring, in religious affairs.[265] Maʿālī certainly enjoyed some form of authority because it is written that he gave the order for construction.

We also read the names of twelve Imāms, almost in order, in addition to the Prophet Muḥammad and his daughter Fāṭima. The inscription in this way reads as if it were designed to evoke the Twelver identity of the mosque and its builders for local audience.[266] A discussion on religion will be presented in Chapter Seven. The last line shows that it was built in the reign of the king Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl in 518 A.H. (1124/5 CE). The poetry of Ibn al-Muqarrab, its commentary, al-Iṣbahānī's *kharīdat al-qaṣr* as well as the second inscription disagree with this *kunya* (i.e. Abū ʿAbdullāh) and name him Abū Sinān.

Figure 10: The ʿUyūnid inscription of Maʿālī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥammād (1124/5 CE). © The author.

[265] Ḥusain Muḥammad Ḥusain, *Masjid al-Khamīs*, 38.

[266] This inscription is supposed to be four centuries before the establishment of the Safavid empire, for the sake of comparison between inscriptions that include the names of Imāms see Luṭfallah Hunarfar, *Ganjīnahʾ-e Āthār-e Tārīkhī-e Iṣfahān: Āthār-e Bāstānī-e va Alvāḥ va Ganjīnah'hā-ye Tārīkhī dar Ustān-e Iṣfahān* (Iṣfahān: Kitābfurūshī Thaqafī, 1971 [1350]); Stephen Blake, *Half the World: The Social Architecture of Safavid Isfahan* 1590-1722 (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1999)

The second inscription is located just beside the previous inscription of Maʿālī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥammād (see figure 11). It is a shorter dateless text which appears to me to be earlier, judging from its writing style. Kalus records it as follows:[267]

(1) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
(2) xxx [عمرت؟] هذه المنارة في أيام الملك العا
(3) دل زين الدنيا والدين القائم في رضا رب العالمين
(4) أبي سنان محمد بن الفضل بن عبدالله

(1) In the name of God the compassionate the merciful
(2) xxx this minaret [was built?] in the time of the ju[st] king
(3) [ju]st Zayn al-Dunya wa-al-Dīn, chief rectifier who arises for the satisfaction of the Lord of the worlds
(4) Abī Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh

One might wonder why we read the name of Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl in two inscriptions placed beside each other. Also, Abū Sinān's adoption of the title of al-Qāʾim to himself while acknowledging the twelfth Imām in the first inscription seems to be odd and reflects superficial understanding of legalistic Twelverism, which designated this title to the awaited *mahdī*.[268]

[267] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 19-20.
[268] See Chapter Seven and Eight for discussion on religion and scholarship in Baḥrayn.

Figure 11: The inscription of the ʿUyūnid emir Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl (d.1130s/40s CE). © The author

11. Administration, *Dawāwīn*, *iqṭāʿāt* and Military of the ʿUyūnid Emirate.

Information regarding the administrative and economic system and its context is also both scarce and fragmented in *Sharḥ dīwān*. This is understandable because the main purpose of the poet and commentator when writing about the early ʿUyūnids, particularly in the *mīmiyya* poem, was to show the glory of the emirs: their high morals, bravery, intelligence, generosity and their military achievements. However, we will attempt to use these brief, scattered pieces of information, as well as using recent scholarship, to address this question.

The emir ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī ruled the region from the city of al-Aḥsāʾ. He appointed several of his sons and relatives as governors and tax collectors in the urban towns and oases in the region. He used the policy of distributing administrative posts among members of his family, to ensure it remained tied together and power was evenly distributed. Al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh, one of the emir's eight sons, who had played a critical military role in establishing and expanding the territory of the emirate, was appointed as a governor of al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. He

became the second most important official in the emirate.[269] The founder also entrusted his other son al-Ḥasan and some of his relatives, such as Amīr ibn Dhawwād and Sulṭān ibn ʿAlī ibn Dhawwād ibn al-Nuʿmān, with governing north of al-Aḥsāʾ.[270] In addition, he designated his relative Abū Yūsuf ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf ibn Ḍabbār ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī as the governor of al-Raḥl. These posts were inherited by the governors' sons and later descendants.[271] The emirate established a treasury '*khizāna*' and barns for the storage of grain. The emirs also appointed viziers and consultants.[272] They adopted a special flag and used drums in army marches and ceremonies.[273] It is unknown whether coins were struck by ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, but certainly his son al-Ḥasan did so, as we will see in the next chapter.

The emirs formed his polity similarly to the developed polities of his time. He used the system of the *dawāwīn* ('office', 'public records', or 'rolls', sing. *dīwān*) to document and register the names of his soldiers, property owners, as well as the land grants. The offices that the emirs established, or which had perhaps already been established by the Qarāmiṭa, were '*dīwān al-imāra*' (perhaps for diplomatic and ceremonial affairs), '*dīwān al-iqṭāʿ*' (land grants office), '*dīwān al-jund*' (the army office) and '*dīwān al-khazāʾin*' (the treasury). These records were managed by the emir's relative Abū Shukr al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAzīz ibn Ḍabbār ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī, and after his death by his sons al-Mubārak and al-Muqarrab.[274] The latter was the father of the poet ʿAlī. This might explain where and why the poet received his education and excelled at poetry. Ali's father may have trained him to work in the chancery after him, which requires linguistic skills.

The emirs used the system of *iqtāʿ* (land grants) to important figures in Baḥraynī elite society to secure their loyalty and both financial and military support.[275] These figures were described as knights '*fursān*'.[276] The emirs utilised many types of land grants. We read that the emirs were accustomed to granting lands '*qaṭāʾiʿ*' as *ḍamān* (something similar to the tenant-in-chief), which means that they gave a notable person a plot of agricultural land, in turn requiring a

[269] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.
[270] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1032.
[271] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1008. There is a list of governors of al-Raḥl on page 1033.
[272] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1005-1007.
[273] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1189.
[274] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1008-9.
[275] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1009, 1010.
[276] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1029, 1032-1034.

certain sum of money to be paid annually. This type of grants perhaps returned to the 'state' after the death of its holder. Other plots of lands were granted as gifts '*hiba*' that were heritable.[277]

In later periods, as we will see below, the nomads of ʿUqayl were granted vast lands in return for their services in supporting the emirs against their rivals from the ruling family. The ʿUqaylids' possession of these lands shifted power in their direction. It not only meant that they owned lands and enjoyed annual revenues, but also that they controlled the farmers who worked for them and consequently influenced an important component of the ʿUyūnid army i.e. the peasant soldiers and the slaves.

The question of which military system the ʿUyūnids followed is difficult to answer. The organisation of the Qarmāṭian military forces (899-1077 CE) might be the closest model to the ʿUyūnid military system, simply because both operated in Baḥrayn and Arabia, and recruited from almost the same population i.e. Arab tribes and local people. The Qarāmiṭa ruled the same region for about 178 years. Again, information about the Qarāmiṭa is scarce. The most obvious feature of the Qarmāṭian military system was its reliance on a confederation of tribes for offensive wars and more on slaves and peasants for defensive wars. The powerful tribe of Āmir Rabīʿa was the most important component of the Qarāmiṭa's army, particularly in its later period. Other important tribes were those of Banū Ḍabba of Kilāb, al-Hārish, Ṭayyiʾ and Kalb in the desert of Syria.[278]

We possess only scattered clues to give us information about the formation of the ʿUyūnid army. Its organisation is likely to have changed over time and according to the circumstances of war. Throughout the *Sharḥ dīwān*, we frequently read in stories and reports of battles words that provide the meaning of assembling or gathering troops, such as *ḥashad*, *jamaʿa* and *inḍamma*; this indicates that a large number of soldiers were not professionals but rather temporary or amateur soldiers who were levied at the time of defensive or offensive battles. They were likely to have been slaves, farmers, pearl divers or other labourers.

[277] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1006-1007.
[278] Thābit ibn Sinān, 'Tārīkh Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa' in *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa fiʾl-Ahsā, al-Shām, al-ʿIrāq, wa-l-Yaman*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, 193; Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī, 'Kitāb Nihāyat al-Arab fī funūn al-Adab' in *al-Jāmiʿ fī Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, 462; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 968; Nāṣir Khusraw, *Safarnāmeh*, 109.

The existence of a special *dīwān* for the army *jund* suggests that the emirate had an army of professional soldiers who were paid a salary, but we do not know if the payment was annual or monthly. The professional soldiers of the ʿUyūnid military and security forces who made a living from salaries distributed by the *dīwān al-jund* namely the army and police, may have been, for instance, the '*ghilmān*' and '*ḥāshiya*' who safeguarded the emir and his places of residence and who also escorted him in offensive wars.[279] The salaried soldiers may also have included those who protected the gates of the cities. In addition, there may have been a small number of soldiers who constituted the nucleus of the emirate's army and led and organised the auxiliary forces gathered from allied tribes, the peasant soldiers sent by the landlords, and the local people. We read in *Sharḥ dīwān* that the '*ʿaskar al-Qaṭīf*', the soldiers of al-Qaṭīf participated in a battle against the Kīshids on the isle of Sitra near Uwāl.[280]

As we have seen above, in order to secure their loyalty by binding their interest to that of the emirs and to provide the treasury with income, a number of ʿUyūnid family members and other figures of the elite community and '*fursān*' were granted lands. It may be assumed that one of the requirements of enjoying this land was perhaps to provide and lead a number of peasants and slaves as temporary soldiers to the emirs in times of war. These temporary forces were gathered to defend the cities mainly from the raids of the Turkmen, Kīshids or the nomads.[281] Slave soldiers had been part of the army of the Qarāmiṭa as reported by Nāṣir Khusraw.[282] This practice is likely to have persisted during the ʿUyūnid emirate.

The tribes of the Baḥraynī and Iraqi deserts also used to join the ʿUyūnid army as auxiliary forces during the periods of which the ʿUyūnid rule was powerful. As we will see below, powerful emirs, such as Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-ʿUyūnī, had brought a grand coalition of the tribes of ʿĀmir, ʿAidh, Khafāja, ʿIbāda, al-ʿAlām and al-Muntafiq under his leadership and fought several tribes in south Iraq to secure the pilgrimage route for the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir (r.1180-1225 CE).[283] Apparently, these tribes were paid in spoils from their defeated foes. The

[279] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1021.
[280] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 1022.
[281] The author of S*harḥ dīwān* writes on the occasion of a battle: 'حتى تخرج النجدة من البلد' which translates as 'until the rescue forces come from the countryside.' See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1036-1037.
[282] Nāṣir Khusraw, *Safarnāmeh*, 110.
[283] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 102, vol.2, 1021.

author of *Sharḥ dīwān* states that the emir distributed the spoils among them.[284] However, we do not have information on whether or not all of these tribes or some of them were registered in the '*dīwān al-jund*' and received monthly or annual stipends. It might be possible that when the ʿUqaylids' influence increased in later periods, they were registered in the '*dīwān al-jund*'. They were called '*khafar al-Baḥrayn*', which means the protectors or guardians of the caravans in Baḥrayn.[285]

Policemen, '*ḥurrās*' served in a number of places. The ʿUyūnids had jails where they not only imprisoned criminals, but also political opponents. The poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab was jailed and had his property expropriated for his opposition to and disagreement with the ʿUyūnid emirs over their ruling policy and their intimate and subordinate relationship with the Bedouins.[286] There were special guards for these prisons '*ḥurrās*'.[287] Since the economy of Baḥrayn relied on farming and trade, market police are likely to have existed; however, our source does not report them.

The issue of judges and the judiciary in the ʿUyūnid emirate is also a vague subject. We know the names of only two judges. The first was ʿAlī ibn abī al-Hawāris, who was alive in 1159 CE, serving in the time of the emir ʿAzīz ibn al-Muqallad in al-Qaṭīf.[288] The second was Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mastūrī, a judge from al-Qaṭīf or Uwāl, as al-Janbī speculates.[289]

12. Conclusion.

The approximately 160 years of the ʿUyūnid emirate began with the revolt of a local sedentary leader called ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, who belonged to the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays. He was a wealthy landlord from the oasis of al-ʿUyūn north of al-Aḥsāʾ. With the support of his family members, a coalition of Baḥraynī minor tribes and the Turkmen chief Urtuq Beg, he succeeded in toppling the Qarāmiṭa in their last stronghold in al-Aḥsāʾ in 469/1077. A subsequent conflict of interests began between the ʿUyūnids, who wanted to be an independent polity, and the

[284] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1021.
[285] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1138.
[286] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1138-1154, 1194-1243.
[287] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 13.
[288] ʿImād al-Dīn Al-Iṣfahānī, *Takmilat Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-ʿIrāq*, 854.
[289] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 511-515.

Turkmen who sought to dominate the region and establish their own polity. ʿAbdullāh al-ʿUyūnī killed the leader of the Turkmen al-Bughūsh and expelled his army from al-Aḥsāʾ.

Several unsuccessful campaigns were carried out by Turkmen chiefs, such as Rukn al-Dawla Suqmān, who was the grandson of Urtuq Beg, as well as Khamārtakin and al-Qārūtī. The emirate in its formative period was characterised by its strength, maintained by its bonded familial ties. The founder, with the help of his sons – most notably al-Faḍl – succeeded in dominating the region and distributing power among the members of the ʿUyūnid family by appointing them to administrative posts and by the use of land grants. Another strategy sought to deprive the Bedouins of the annual amount of money which they had previously received from the Qarāmiṭa as a price for their loyalty and their protection of the trade routes, and even to prevent them from pasturing in Baḥraynī deserts. However, shortly afterwards another tribe arrived in Baḥrayn, perhaps from the Central Arabian or Iraqi deserts, and soon constituted a dangerous rival to the ʿUyūnids: they were the ʿUqaylids.

Contrary to modern historians' hypothesis that a relationship existed between the founder ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī and the Fāṭimid Caliphate, It is argued that the evidence which they draw upon is problematic. It is also argued that neither the ʿAbbāsids/Seljūqs nor the Fāṭimids were interested in annexing the region of Baḥrayn, as modern historians have contended. Neither was the region a battlefield between the Sunni Seljūqs and the Shīʿite Fāṭimids, as modern historians have portrayed it. It is likely that the uncontrolled Turkmen were acting according to their own interests and sought to establish their own autonomous principalities in peripheral areas. In this, they were following a pattern that had been established particularly after Manzikert in 1071 CE.

The emirate established or perhaps continued to use an advanced civic administrative system. It possessed a number of *dawāwīn* that were used to register and record soldiers, land grants, matters of the treasury and diplomatic and ceremonial affairs. The emirate also took viziers similarly to the polities/empires of their time. This period ended with the murder of the emir Abū Sinān.

Chapter Four:

The Decline and Fall of the ʿUyūnid Emirate 1130s–1236 CE

1. Introduction.

This chapter studies the decline and fall of the ʿUyūnid emirate. It begins with the period of the emirate's political schism between al-Aḥsāʾ on one side and al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl on the other side following the murder of Abū Sinān sometime in the 1130s/1140s CE. It also covers the short period of the emirate's recovery and reunification (1200s-1220 CE). The period of the emirate's weakness and the collapse (1200s-1236 CE) at the hands of the Salghūrid Atābeg in Uwāl and the ʿUqaylids in al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf will be analysed.

The chapter argues that the deep conflicts and divisions within the ruling family weakened the emirate profoundly. This enabled both the ʿUqaylids and the external power of the Kīshids and subsequently the Atābeg Abū Bakr al-Salghūrī to occupy Baḥraynī lands and isles, tax the ʿUyūnids heavily, and eventually to seize power.

2. The Period of Political Division among al-Aḥsāʾ, al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl (1130s/40s-1200s CE).

The murder of the emir Abū Sinān ushered in a new political era for the ʿUyūnid emirate. Although Baḥrayn remained under ʿUyūnid rule, the emirate became divided into two and sometimes three smaller emirates, which resembled the model of city-states. This period was characterised by severe conflict and division between the ʿUyūnid emirs, who began to conspire against, fight and assassinate each other. The influence of the ʿUqaylid tribal leaders began to increase as they exploited the divisions and rivalries by supporting some emirs against the others. Moreover, this period also marked the emergence of a new regional rival, which was the island of Kīsh or Qays located at the mouth of the Gulf. This island would become in the near future a highly important centre of maritime trade. Its ruler, Bākarzā or Bākarzāz, began to wage frequent raids on the island of Uwāl and occasionally took control of it. He also exploited the divisions and rivalries between the ʿUyūnid emirs and interfered in Baḥraynī politics and economics by allying with some emirs against others.

The *Sharḥ diwān*'s presentation of the historical narrative from this period until the demise of the emirate unfortunately becomes increasingly vague, and is on many occasions inconsistent regarding names, dates and order of events. Due to this problem, modern historians differ in how they order the events as well as in how they interpret them.

Al-Aḥsāʾ came under the rule of Abū al-Manṣūr ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, the oldest uncle of Abū Sinān.[290] The island of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf came under the rule of Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, Abū Sinān's youngest uncle.[291] After the death of al-Ḥasan, who left young children, al-Qaṭīf was seized by the emir ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, Abū Sinān's cousin.[292] Thus three ʿUyūnid emirs ruled in three politically separated cities.

2.1 Al-Aḥsāʾ under the Branch of ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī.

It is reported that after ʿAlī and his brother al-Ḥasan killed their nephew Abū Sinān, ʿAlī became the emir of al-Aḥsāʾ.[293] The most important event in ʿAlī's reign was the battle against his nephew ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī, or ʿAzīz ibn al-Faḍl, the ruler of al-Qaṭīf who seized control after the death of al-Ḥasan, the emir of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. It was called the battle of al-Sulaymāt (an area close to al-Aḥsāʾ). The Aḥsāʾī army was defeated by ʿAzīz but his army did not enter the city or occupy it. The poet and the commentator explain how Abū Manṣūr ʿAlī proved considerably generous when the people lost their crops due to the war and to an agricultural blight which occurred in that year. It is reported that he 'opened the treasury' and exempted his people from paying taxes.[294]

A deeper internal division in the family occurred. The emir ʿAlī was killed by three of his sons: Manṣūr, Musayyab and Aḥmad. The rest of his sons fled al-Aḥsāʾ and went to the ʿUqaylids in the desert where they were hosted by the sons of Shabāna ibn Ghufayla. With the

[290] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1005-6.
[291] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1006-7.
[292] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.
[293] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1002.
[294] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1005-6.

support of this tribe, they took their revenge by killing their brother Manṣūr, and became the emirs of al-Aḥsāʾ.[295]

From that time until the reunification of the region around the turn of the thirteenth century, the emirs of al-Aḥsāʾ would mainly be the descendants of ʿAlī. The political influence of the tribe of the ʿUqaylids increased following their participation in the conflict between the emirs of al-Aḥsāʾ, through which they found a way to enter the emirate's house.

The sources began to provide more information about al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl than al-Aḥsāʾ. This is either because it was less important, or more likely that the poet, who was a native of this city deliberately omitted recounting verses about past events in al-Aḥsāʾ for personal reasons related to his troubled relationship with and his feelings towards his contemporaneous emirs of al-Aḥsāʾ who imprisoned him and confiscated his property.[296]

2.2 The Island of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf under the Branch of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī.

Al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī (d.1154 CE) took control of al-Qaṭīf and the island of Uwāl. His reign lasted for eleven years.[297] He does not appear to have faced serious challenges. He attracted some families from surrounding Baḥraynī areas to immigrate. An example of this is the account of the emigration of the family of al-Dayāsima of the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays, which left al-Aḥsāʾ, under his brother ʿAlī. They arrived in al-Qaṭīf where they received a warm welcome with properties, plentiful sums of money and servants/slaves granted to them by al-Ḥasan.[298]

Our written sources do not tell us exactly when al-Ḥasan ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, except for a reference in the appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān* to the eleven years of rule which followed the murder of Abū Sinān.[299] However, archaeological evidence sheds more light on this matter. The coins belonging to al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh that have been discovered and studied by Nāyif al-

[295] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1186-7.
[296] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 12.
[297] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.
[298] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1007-8.
[299] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.

Sharʿān reveal information on the name of the emir, place of minting, date and religio-political motto.

The coins of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī were minted between the years 544-549 /1149-1154; al-Ḥasan held the epithet of Jamāl al-Dunya wa-al-Dīn (see figure 12). There were two minting places written on a number of the coins: Arḍ al-Khaṭṭ, al-Khaṭṭ (both were other names for al-Qaṭīf), and Uwāl. Most of the coins featured the motto *ʿAlī walyy Allāh* (ʿAlī is the friend of God), which is a very clear and obvious Shīʿite slogan. These coins, which were made of lead and copper, may have been struck to assert and legitimise his rule following the murder of his nephew. Al-Sharʿān interprets that al-Ḥasan aimed by omitting the names of either ʿAbbāsid or Fāṭimid Caliph at asserting the complete independence of his emirate from both the ʿAbbāsid and Fāṭimid Caliphates.[300]

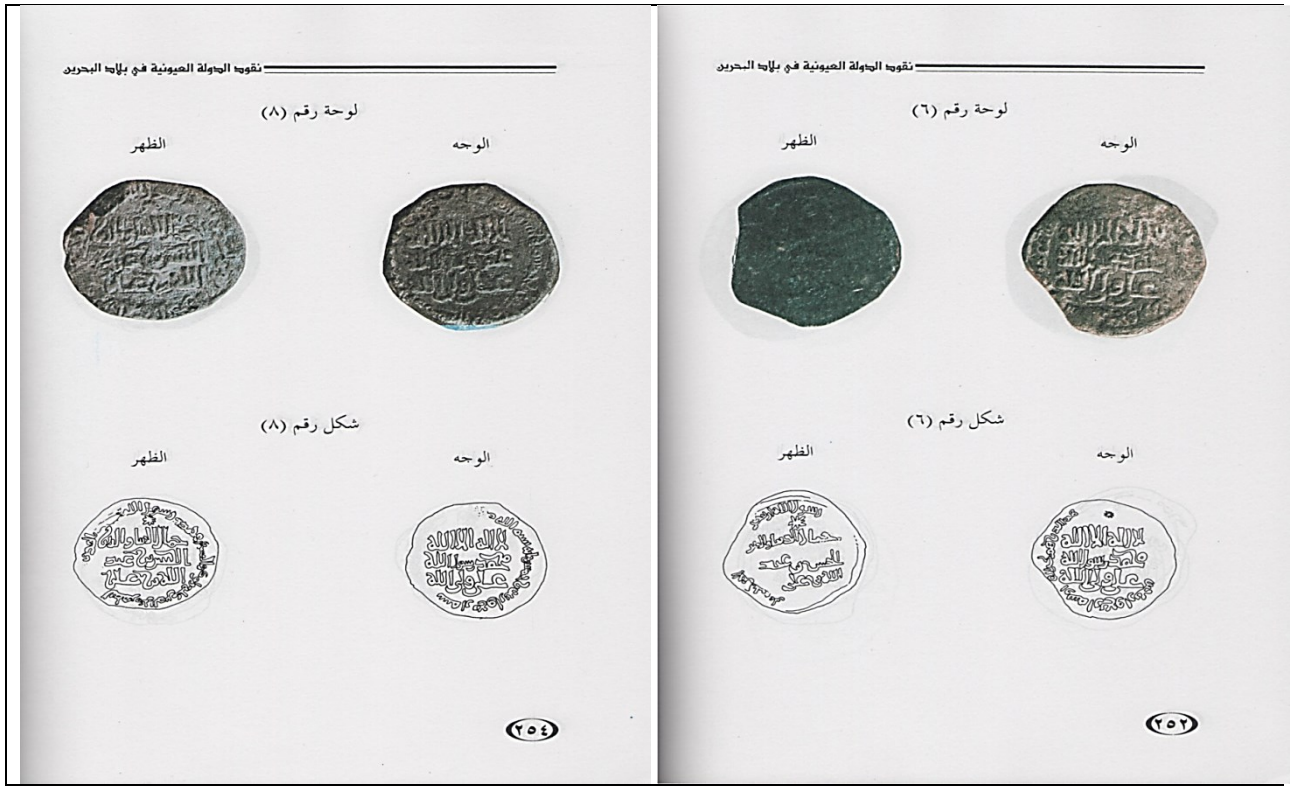

Figure 12: Samples of the ʿUyūnid coins. © Nāyif al-Sharʿān, *Nuqūd al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya*, 252-254.

[300] Nāyif al-Sharʿān, *Nuqūd al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya,* 91-144, 158, 224. See Chapter Seven for the discussion of religion in Baḥrayn.

2.3 The Conflict over the Rule of al-Qaṭīf and the Raids of Kīsh.

The political situation in al-Qaṭīf grew more complicated and less stable after the death of its emir al-Ḥasan. A number of emirs from other branches of the family succeeded each other after a short period of rule. Our source, *Sharḥ dīwān* presents some information on the emirs who succeeded al-Ḥasan. The first was ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, Abū Sinān's cousin.[301] The appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān* reveals that during ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad's reign, the Kīshids raided Uwāl in 1154 CE.[302] This date was struck on al-Ḥasan's latest coins, which suggests it was al-Ḥasan's final year in power and the first year of ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad.

Another source, *Takmilat kharīdat al-qaṣr wa-jarīdat al-ʿaṣr* by ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, confirms the name ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad and adds that he held the epithet of Qiwām al-Dīn and was in power in 554/1159.[303] Despite this, we find in *Sharḥ dīwān* that a ruler called ʿAzīz ibn al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh was described as the king, and was visited by a poet called al-Thaʿlabī, who recited a panegyric poem to him.[304] It is difficult to determine who ruled before the other, or whether they were the same person. However, the emir ʿAzīz ibn Muqallad was killed by his cousin Hajras ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullāh, whose reign did not last long: he ruled only for one year.[305]

A new external threat was now posed by a tiny island called Kīsh or Qays at the Gulf, which began to raid Uwāl. The Kīshid polity was known for its extensive maritime trade activity in the Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. It attempted to occupy and control the strategically important seaports of the Gulf in order to operate a network of maritime trade; Uwāl was one of these seaports.[306] According to the appendix of the *Sharḥ dīwān*, in 549/1154 the king of Kīsh, who was called Bākazrā or Bākarzāz ibn Asʿad ibn Qayṣar, occupied and looted Uwāl, where he remained for a while before leaving.[307] *Sharḥ dīwān* adds and explains that Abū

[301] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287.
[302] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1287-8.
[303] ʿImād al-Dīn Al-Iṣfahānī, *Takmilat Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: Qism Shuʿarā' al-ʿIrāq*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: al-Majmaʿ al-ʿIlmī al-ʿIrāqī, 1980), 853.
[304] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1003. The words فضل and مقلد have morphological similarities.
[305] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1288.
[306] See D.T. Potts, 'Kish Island,' *Encyclopaedia Iranica*; Ralph Kauz, 'The Maritime trade of Kish' in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 51-67.
[307] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1288.

Muqaddam Shukr ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī,[308] who took control after the death of Hajras ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullāh, sent his brother al-Zīr ibn al-Ḥasan to fight the invaders at Sitra in Uwāl, and that he defeated the Kīshids and captured the brother of the king Namsār, but released him afterwards.[309]

A series of invasions were waged by Bākazrā of Kīsh. The rule of Uwāl alternated between the ʿUyūnids and Bākazrā, depending on who proved victorious in the battles. According to the interpretation of al-Mudayris, the Kīshids became sufficiently familiar to the ʿUyūnids that they occasionally allied with ʿUyūnid emirs against others, exploiting their divisions and rivalries. An example of this is the story of Shukr ibn Manṣūr and his brother ʿAbdullāh who allied with the Kīshids and fought the emir of Uwāl in the battle of Ibn al-Ḥayyāsh.[310] Although I cannot determine how al-Mudayris interpreted the narrative to argue for the existence of this alliance and on what evidence, his interpretation seems reasonable and could be predicted due to the existence of mutual interests between the emirs and the Kīshids.

It seems that the ʿUyūnid emirate failed to establish a strong naval force to operate in the Gulf as they suffered recurrent attacks from the Iranian polities, such as the kingdom of Kīsh and later from the Atābegate of Fārs. The ʿUyūnids did not even show interest in entering the contest between the Iranian-based polities that competed for dominance of maritime trade in the Gulf. This is due perhaps to two reasons; the internal crises and struggles among the emirs and the ʿUqaylids as well as their strategic orientation towards agriculture-based economy and politics.

3. The Period of Recovery and Reunification under Shukr ibn Manṣūr and Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (*c.*1200-*c.*1230).

Almost forty years of political fragmentation came to an end with the rise of the emir Shukr ibn Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī, who jointly with his brother ʿAbdullāh combined the three main cities under his rule and began what is called by modern historians of the ʿUyūnids 'the period of recovery and

[308] He should not be confused with his cousin who had the same name and *kunya*, Abū Muqaddam Shukr ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī.

[309] The poet says: ألفين غادر منهم مع ثمانيميء صرعى فكم مرضع من بعدها ويوم سترة منا كان صاحبه لاقت به سامة والحاسك الرقما يتما see the commentary in Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1022-1023.

[310] See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1289-1290; ʿAbdulraḥmān al-Mudayris, *al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn*, 125.

reunification'. Shukr was the emir of al-Aḥsāʾ, the town which had long been ruled by ʿAlī's branch. He managed to occupy al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl which were ruled by Ḥasan ibn Shukr ibn al-Ḥasan, a descendant of al-Ḥasan's branch. The emir Shukr ruled the entire region for seven years, paving the way for another important emir.

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl (*c*.1212-*c*.1230 CE), who was a grandson of Abū Sinān.[311] The emir Muḥammad proved successful because he had more political tools at his disposal than his predecessors. He derived his power from two main sources: the first was the tribe of the ʿUqaylids, whose leaders were his uncles and later his brothers-in-law. The second was the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīnallāh (r.1180-1225), with whom he developed a political and military alliance.

3.1 The Alliance between the Emir Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad and the ʿUqaylids.

The poetry of ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī is relatively rich in information concerning the emir Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl and his policies and achievements, because the poet met the emir on several occasions and delivered his early poems.[312]

The emir Muḥammad came to power twice. He first ascended to the throne in *c*.1202-1203 CE, but abdicated for unknown reasons after a short period of rule.[313] He went to the desert and lived with the leaders of the ʿUqaylids, who were also his maternal uncles.[314] His mother was Ṭurayfa bint Shabāna ibn Ghufayla, the sister of the ʿUqaylids' sheikh.[315]

This relationship was beneficial to the emir because it united him with the ʿUqaylids, who had been a source of trouble for the previous emirs. Now instead of being challenged by them, he was able to lead them. The emir Muḥammad also used a political marriage to consolidate his relationship with the ʿUqaylids. He married the sister of al-Ḥusain ibn al-Mufaddā ibn Sinān ibn Ghufayla ibn Shabāna who was also his cousin.[316] Furthermore, the emir

[311] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1034, 1289-1290.
[312] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 91.
[313] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1289.
[314] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 681.
[315] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1163.
[316] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 729-730.

made political pacts with other branches of the ʿUqaylids.[317] Muḥammad seems to have distanced his ʿUyūnid kin because of their potential for treachery. Dependence on the ʿUyūnid family as a means to secure power became an invalid strategy after the series of assassinations of previous ʿUyūnid emirs.

With the assistance of the ʿUqaylids, he succeeded in seizing control of al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl from Shukr ibn Manṣūr and his brother ʿAbdullāh, who fled to al-Aḥsāʾ.[318] Later, he defeated Shukr and became the sole emir of the entire region. He perhaps moved his capital from al-Qaṭīf to al-Aḥsāʾ, which was likely closer to the pastures of the ʿUqaylids. In al-Aḥsāʾ, he received diplomatic envoys and started his military campaigns.[319]

3.2 The Alliance between the Emir Muḥammad and the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīnallāh.

The alliance with the Bedouins was perhaps insufficient for the ambitious emir. He sought to acquire another source of power and a new and different kind of legitimacy. The emir's ambitions dovetailed with the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir's strategic needs. To explain al-Nāṣir's strategy, Hanne writes that 'from the reign of al-Qādir, the Caliphs began to reassert their position within Baghdād, defending their role in legitimating other regional powers' and that 'by the reign of al-Nāṣir li-Dīnallāh (r.1180-1225), the ʿAbbāsids were a palpable force in the region.'[320]

Al-Nāṣir entrusted the emir with protecting the pilgrimage route from the Bedouins of the Iraqi desert. It is reported that the tribes of Ghazya of Ṭayyiʾ, Zabīd, al-Khalṭ and Rabīʿāt al-Shām attempted to loot the caravans and to extort from them extra sums of money. When the news reached the Caliph, he sent a messenger to al-Aḥsāʾ requesting that the emir Muḥammad combats the Bedouins and protects the pilgrimage route. The emir saw a golden opportunity to link himself with the Caliphate, and therefore he organised his army and established a broad

[317] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 685, 1163.
[318] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1290.
[319] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1018.
[320] Eric J. Hanne, *Putting the Caliph in His Place: Power, Authority, and the Late ʿAbbāsid Caliphate* (New Jersey: Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp., 2007), 21, 25.

coalition of Baḥraynī and Iraqi tribes, such as ʿĀʾidh, al-ʿAlam, Khafāja, ʿIbāda and al-Muntafiq. The army reached the desert of Iraq and defeated the tribes, pursuing the remnants of the enemy forces to the shrines of ʿAlī in al-Najaf and al-Ḥusain in al-Ghaḍiriyya in Karbalāʾ where they took refuge. The leader of the defeated tribe of Ghazya, Dahmash ibn Sanad ibn Ajwad, entered the Shrine of ʿAlī, but was captured and sent to the Caliph. Ibn al-Muqarrab described that the emir became very influential in the deserts of Iraq, Syria, Najd and Oman.[321]

The poet described the Caliph's satisfaction with the achievement of the emir in many verses. The Caliph is said to have named the emir *zaʿīm al-aʿārib* (the leader of the Arabs or the Bedouins).[322] Moreover, the commentator added that the Caliph rewarded the emir with annual gifts, consisting of luxurious Egyptian and Iranian clothing and food supplies, such as barley, wheat, rice and dates from al-Baṣra.[323]

3.3 The Breakdown of the Emir's Alliance with Several Branches of the ʿUqaylids and his Murder.

In the later period of the emir's reign, the alliance that he had established with several branches of the ʿUqaylids weakened. Perhaps with all the glory achieved and the influence accrued by the emir, branches of the ʿUqaylid tribe felt that they became marginalised and assumed a secondary position in the emirate. The appendix shows that the emir had a vizier named al-Ḥājj ʿAlī ibn al-Fāris al-Kazarūnī.[324] This *nisba* of Kazarūn refers to a Persian town close to Shīrāz.[325] The appointment of this vizier, potentially Persian in origin/education, may have been an important reason for the ʿUqaylids' disappointment. The Bedouins' relationship with the emir began to change.[326] It appears that some branches of the ʿUqaylids, who perhaps were neither personally related to the emir nor enjoyed direct social relations with him, and who did not possess

[321] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1017-1020. The poet recites: منا الذي ضُرِبَت حُمْرُ القِباب له بالمشهدين وأعطى الأمن وانتقما
[322] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 102. The poet says: ومال أمير المؤمنين بوده إليه وسماه زعيم الأعارب
[323] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1020-21. The poet recites: منا الذي كل عام بالعراق له رَسمٌ سَنِي إلى أن ضُمِّن الرّجما
[324] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1290.
[325] See Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.4, 429-430.
[326] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 377, 1095.

economic and political privileges in the emirate, began to complain and to prepare for political action.

These dissatisfied branches of the ʿUqaylid tribe, led by Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān ibn Ghufayla, and an emir from the ruling family called Ghurayr ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Shukr ibn ʿAlī hatched a plot to seize power in the emirate. Rāshid would kill the emir Muḥammad, and Ghurayr would be throned in his place. In return, Rāshid would acquire the properties of al-Qaṭīf that were owned by the emirate, in addition to farms in Uwāl, horses, weapons, and a number of pearling and travelling ships. Moreover, his family, his branch of the tribe and those who cooperated with him would receive an annual amount of money and luxurious clothing from the emirate. The deal was achieved and the emir Muḥammad was killed and buried in al-Qaṭīf in the turn of the thirteenth century.[327]

Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra became, afterwards, the most powerful leader in the region; he not only owned vast properties and almost controlled the economy of Baḥrayn, but also controlled the emir Ghurayr ibn al-Ḥasan.[328] His son, ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid, would later establish the so-called ʿUṣfūrid emirate or the ʿUqaylid emirate.[329]

4. The Period of Decline and Fall.

Following the assassination of the emir Muḥammad, the emirate lost its political and military influence in the region and descended into turmoil. It was divided again into two polities, one in al-Aḥsāʾ, and the second in al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. Over about thirty years, control of the emirate passed to more than ten different emirs, who possessed reduced power and influence. They became puppets in the hands of the powerful ʿUqaylids, and in particular the branch of Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra and his son ʿUṣfūr, who were called sometimes al-ʿAmāyir and in modern studies 'al-ʿUṣfūriyyūn'.

The Caliph unsuccessfully attempted to restore the power of the emirate by supporting the son of the emir Muḥammad, who was named al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad. The Kīshids also

[327] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 603, vol.2, 806, 916, 1226-7.
[328] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 806.
[329] See Chapter Four.

resumed their raids on Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, becoming more influential in the region. However, the Kīshid king lost his kingdom when the Atābeg Abū Bakr al-Salghūrī occupied Kīsh. Abū Bakr later put an end to the ʿUyūnid emirate in Uwāl in 1236 CE. The inland city of al-Aḥsāʾ came under the ʿUqaylids.

4.1 The ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and its Support for the Emir al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad.

The emir Faḍl ibn Muḥammad and his uncle al-Ḥusain ibn a-Mufaddā ibn Sinān, who was from the loyal branch of the ʿUqaylids, travelled to Baghdād to beseech the Caliph al-Nāṣir for his support in securing the emirate for him, as his father was al-Nāṣir's ally. It is reported that he asked the Caliph for siege equipment, such as mangonels and oil, together with soldiers capable of using them. The Caliph responded positively, and dispatched the arms and soldiers with the emir. The mission succeeded and Faḍl became the emir of al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl, taking revenge on Ghurayr after the latter had reigned for a year.[330]

However, the relationship between the Caliphate and Baḥrayn afterwards appeared to have deteriorated. The Caliph could no longer depend on weak emirs who lacked effective power to secure the trade and pilgrimage routes in the deserts of Iraq and Arabia. Moreover, the emir Faḍl gave his ʿUqaylid uncle al-Ḥusain ibn al-Mufaddā and his family numerous properties and sums of money, as a price for their loyalty, but actually at the expense of his own power over the emirate, as well as the landlords' private properties.[331]

4.2 The Control of the Kīshids over Baḥrayn's Economy.

The emir Faḍl was forced to make a humiliating treaty with the governor of Kīsh, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Shāh ibn Tāj al-Dīn Jamshīd, by which the ʿUyūnid emir paid the Kīshids large amount of annual tax and surrendered the emirate's sovereignty over many smaller islands in the Gulf in their favour.

[330] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1227-8, 916.
[331] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1227-8.

The appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān* details the provisions of the treaty. It states that the three Baḥraynī isles, Ukul, al-Jārim and al-Ṭuyūr, fell under Kīshid rule. The villages of Adam al-Madbagha, al-Ḥūra, Samāhīj and ʿAskar al-Samak in Uwāl also went to the Kīshids. A sum of 500 dīnars was to be paid annually to the ruler of Kīsh. Moreover, he must receive half of the tax on several commercial activities, including pearl diving and farming (the *kharāj* and the *ʿushūr*) besides owning many farms in al-Qaṭīf and Tārūt. This treaty persisted even after the murder of the emir Faḍl, who ruled for ten years.[332] Yāqūt, confirming this, describes that the king of Kīsh came to receive two thirds of Baḥrayn's income.[333] The emirate, thus, became, in reality, the dominion of the ʿUqaylids and the Kīshids.

The kingdom of Kīsh under Banī Qayṣar came to an end in 626/1229 at the hands of the king of Hormuz, Sayf al-Dīn Abū Naḍar, who was a vassal of the Atābeg of Fārs, Saʿd ibn Zankī al-Salghūrī (d.628/1230).[334] The kingdom of Hormuz was a maritime trade competitor of Kīsh.[335] The appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān* reports that Sayf al-Dīn Abū Naḍar (or Abū Naṣr according to Vaṣṣāf) sent an official called Shihāb al-Dīn Jisraw (or maybe Khusraw) to collect the same sum of money that was paid to the Kīshids.

4.3 The Fall of the ʿUyūnid Emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ to the ʿUqaylids in *c.*1229 CE.

The rule of al-Aḥsāʾ returned to the branch of ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh. A number of emirs ruled the town, including Muḥammad ibn Mājid ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī, who ruled for ten years before he was killed by his uncle Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad, who seized the throne. The next ruler was the latter's son al-Faḍl ibn Masʿūd, who took many properties from his own family and granted them to the ʿUqaylids. Other notable emirs included ʿAlī ibn Mājid, and Muqaddam ibn Azīz ibn al-Ḥasan, who imposed high taxes on the inhabitants. There were also less important emirs who ruled for very short periods, such as ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh. The last ʿUyūnid emir in

[332] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1291-3.
[333] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.4, 422.
[334] See Rashīd al-Dīn Hamadānī, *Jāmiʿ al-Tawārīkh: Tārīkh-e Salghurīyān-e Fārs ed. Muḥammad Rawshan* (Tehrān: Markaz-e Pizhūhishī-e Mīrās-e Maktūb, 2010); Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh Guzīde*, ed. ʿAbdulḥusain Nawāʾī (Tehrān: Muʾasasat Intishārāt-e Amīr Kabīr, 1387[1988]), 505-6.
[335] The most comprehensive study on the Kingdom of Hormuz is the two-volume book of Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya* (Raʾs al-Khaima: Markaz al-Dirāsāt wa-l-Wathāʾiq, 1999), 120.

al-Aḥsāʾ was perhaps Abū al-Qāsim Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Manṣūr ʿAlī.[336] The poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab met almost all of these emirs. The emir of al-Aḥsāʾ, Muḥammad ibn Mājid, seized Ibn al-Muqarrab's property and imprisoned him in a basement building. Later, when he was released, he moved to al-Qaṭīf. There, he delivered many panegyric poems extolling the emirs in attempts to convince them to return some or all of his properties, but he never received anything.[337] This is perhaps because many properties of ʿUyūnid family members had by that time been transferred to the ʿUqaylids by several means, such as threats of violence, extortion, and legal process.[338]

The actual rulers in al-Aḥsāʾ were ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra and the leaders of the ʿUqaylid tribe. Āl ʿAbdulqādir and al-Ḥumaydān plausibly interpret from a story in *Sharḥ dīwān* that a general disappointment existed among the elite of al-Aḥsāʾ (probably the merchants and landlords), directed towards the emir of al-Aḥsāʾ Abū al-Qāsim Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Manṣūr ʿAlī, potentially the last ʿUyūnid emir, who was no longer able to protect them and their businesses. This led them to terminate their allegiance to him and pay it instead to ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid.[339] Our source does not inform us of any military defeat or murder of this emir, but it describes the plot that was hatched between the unnamed members of the elite and the ʿUqaylids against the emir and his family. The conspirators devised a legal ploy which caused ownership of most of the properties of the ʿUyūnid family to be transferred to the ʿUqaylids, thus ending the influence of the ʿUyūnid family. The anonymous commentator of *Sharḥ dīwān* writes:

> The emir Abū al-Qāsim Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī appointed several people [as viziers or consultants] who were not his relatives. He was very kind with good intentions [naïve?]. He depended on them for all matters of governance. However, they were, in fact, against him and working on the destruction of the emirate and the ʿUyūnid family. The emir fully submitted to their opinions and could not do anything without their approval. One day, they [the viziers or consultants] spoke with the Bedouin leaders and agreed on a conspiracy against the emir and the ʿUyūnid family, in which the Bedouins would attack the town [al-Aḥsāʾ] and they [the viziers] would guarantee the transfer of the farms of the ʿUyūnid family in al-Aḥsāʾ to the Bedouin ownership. The Bedouins attacked the town, besieged it and prevented the people from reaching their farms outside the town to harvest. The

[336] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 12, 16-17, 337-8, vol.2, 1193-4.
[337] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 12, 16-17, 92 n.213.
[338] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1138-1140.
[339] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1036-1038, 1138-1154, 1194-1243; Muḥammad Āl ʿAbdulqādir, *Tuḥfat al-Mustafīd*, vol.1, 112-118; ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 38-39. They both name this emir al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad although the source reads Abū al-Qāsim Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad.

[viziers] convinced the emir to agree to terms with the Bedouins and pay them a ransom in gold. The Bedouins asked for an amount of money in gold that was beyond the emir's and the people's capacity. They [the viziers] told the Bedouins [secretly] to ask for a mortgage on the ʿUyūnid family properties. When the emir consulted them [the viziers] they agreed and so did he. The emir gave the Bedouins some of the gold but it was insufficient, then he began to write down the mortgage contracts for each Bedouin leader who asked to take farms by their description or by its protectors; the Bedouins deliberately avoided mentioning the names of the owners of these farms who were in fact members of the ʿUyūnid family. The emir was deceived. When the rest of the money was due, the ʿUyūnids could not offer it, and accordingly they lost their properties to the Bedouins. The poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab recited this poem that mourns that disaster.[340]

We do not know for certain if this plot meant the immediate end of ʿUyūnid authority in al-Aḥsāʾ or only the loss of the ʿUyūnid's wealth. Nonetheless, wealth and political authority are closely connected and must be combined in the possession of the emir in order for him to rule. With an economic loss of this scale, maintaining political power would be nearly impossible in this tribal community.

The source does not specify the identities of these members of the elite, except for one figure in al-Aḥsāʾ: Sheikh Abū ʿAlī Ibrāhīm ibn Jarwān who belonged to ʿAbd al-Qays. The commentator accuses him of plotting against an ʿUyūnid emir and installing another ʿUyūnid emir named Muqaddam ibn ʿAzīz, who was perhaps the penultimate emir, and was a puppet in the hands of the ʿUqaylids. Ibrāhīm used to be a friend of the poet Ibn al-Muqarrab who recited some poems in his honour, but later wrote him poems of reproach and censure for his betrayal of the ʿUyūnid family.[341] Modern historians, Āl ʿAbdulqādir and al-Ḥumaydān, relying on a poem of Ibn al-Muqarrab, believe that he was the leader of the elite/viziers who plotted against the last ʿUyūnid emir, although the source does not state this explicitly.[342] They may have been merchants and landlords.

We might date the collapse of the ʿUyūnid emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ by relying on the only available piece of information, offered by the Ottoman historian Munajjim Bāshī, who died five centuries later (d.1702). He records that ʿUṣfūr, the ʿUqaylid leader, maintained a friendly relationship with the penultimate king of Banī Qayṣar, Jamshīd, and that ʿUṣfūr was a frequent

[340] Abbreviated and slightly modified from Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1138-1140.
[341] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 313-350, vol.2, 699-711, 1193-1243.
[342] Muḥammad Āl ʿAbdulqādir, *Tuḥfat al-Mustafīd*, vol.1, 112, 114-118; ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 39.

visitor to the court. He also describes him as the emir ʿUṣfūr.[343] King Jamshīd died in 1229 CE and was succeeded by Abū al-Muẓaffar, as reported in the appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān*.[344] I do not know what source Munajjim Bāshī used for this piece of information. If we were to accept it, it would mean that ʿUṣfūr officially became the emir of al-Aḥsāʾ before 1229 CE.

4.4 The Fall of the ʿUyūnid Emirate in al-Qaṭīf to the ʿUqaylids (*c.*1233 CE) and in Uwāl to the Salghūrids (1236 CE).

Information concerning the end of the emirate is to be found in two main sources; the appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān* and *Tārīkh Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra* by Vaṣṣāf/Shīrāzī. They present slightly different details of the account of the fall of the emirate. For instance, they differ regarding the name of the last emir, his exact destiny and the date.

A new ʿUyūnid emir named Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (or Muḥammad ibn Abī Mājid in Vaṣṣāf's version) emerged, killed his nephew Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī ibn Mājid and ruled al-Qaṭīf and took back Uwāl. He was in power for five years in total, but only ruled al-Qaṭīf for three years and five months as reported in the appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān*.[345] He lost al-Qaṭīf under obscure circumstances, apparently to the ʿUqaylids as indicated by Vaṣṣāf.[346] Before that, the emir repelled two Salghūrid campaigns in al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl. This emir was mentioned in the commentary on *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd (d.1258 CE), who was a writer in the caliphal chancery. He wrote that when he served as a writer in the chancery of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Mustanṣir (r.1226-1242 CE), the emir of Baḥrayn, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad, arrived in the court of the Caliph in Baghdād in 632 A.H [1235/6 CE]. The emir reportedly took the inland route and his Arabs filled Baghdād. The king of Hormuz also arrived in Baghdād by ship, via the river Tigris. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd wrote a poem to celebrate this event.[347] It seems that

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[343] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 40 cites Munajjim Bāshī, *Jamiʿ al-Duwal*, MS. al-Sulaymāniya Library in Istanbul No.418, the collection of Asad Afandī, No. 2101, 647.

[344] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1294. It was Jamshīd who made the humiliating treaty with Faḍl ibn Muḥammad, taking most of Baḥrayn's revenues and bringing Baḥraynī islands under his sovereignty as discussed above.

[345] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1295.

[346] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Taḥrīr-e Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra* (Tehrān: Bunyād-e Farhange Iran, 1364[1945]), 104-5.

[347] ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo [al-Qāhira]: Dār Iḥyā al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-Shurakāh, 1967), vol.16, 109.

al-Mustanṣir invited several emirs and kings to his court, but we do not know for sure what occurred between them.

We have only a piece of information from Vaṣṣāf who wrote that when the Atābeg of Fārs, Abū Bakr, invaded Uwāl in 1236 CE, it was under the authority of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph Mustaʿṣim-billāh. This would seem to be a mistake because al-Mustaʿṣim-billāh became Caliph six years later in 1242 CE; he perhaps meant his father al-Mustanṣir (r.1226-1242 CE). The emir Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad perhaps tried to extend the life of his fading emirate by seeking ʿAbbāsid protection and enjoying legitimacy and a kind of immunity. He actually followed a pattern of political tactics used by the previous emirs, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Ḥusain and al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad, who had sought political and military cooperation with the ʿAbbāsids in times of serious crises.

The Atābeg of Fārs Abū Bakr (r.1230/1260) ordered his vassal, the king of Hormuz Sayf al-Dīn Abū Naḍar to occupy the island of Kīsh and to send him the revenues of Kīsh and Uwāl. Although Abū Naḍar invaded and killed the last Qayṣarid king in Kīsh, he refused to pay the revenues to Abū Bakr. Accordingly, the Atābeg occupied the island of Kīsh in 1230 CE and killed Abū Naḍar.[348] Vaṣṣāf writes that on the third of *Dhū al-Ḥijja* 633 [August 1236 CE], Abū Bakr invaded Uwāl and expelled the last ʿUyūnid emir. However, the appendix of *Sharḥ Dīwān* gives two dates for this invasion, the first is 633[1236 CE] and the second is 636[1238] and that the emir's destiny was murder instead of expulsion.[349] Vaṣṣāf describes Uwāl as being under the authority of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Mustaʿṣim-billāh (r.1242-1258 CE), which is perhaps an erroneous reference to al-Mustanṣir (r.1226-1242 CE). He also explains that al-Qaṭīf was already under the authority of the Bedouins (perhaps referring to the ʿUqaylids).[350]

In a very important observation, al-Janbī noted that the poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab never mentioned the Salghūrids in his poems, and neither did the anonymous commentator in the *Sharḥ dīwān*, despite all of their raids and occupation. However, the Kīshids and the ʿUqaylids were criticised in his poems. This deliberate neglect, writes al-Janbī, may have been due to the

[348] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Taḥrīr-e Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra*, 104-5.
[349] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1295.
[350] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1294-5; ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra*, 105.

poet's fear of the Salghūrids who were ruling Baḥrayn at the time of compiling his *dīwān*.[351] Our information on the Salghūrids only comes from the appendix of *Sharḥ dīwān*. This means that it may have been written under their rule, especially when we read that the author writes a prayer for the Atābeg Abū Bakr: 'may God prolongs the rule of the victorious Sultan.'[352]

5. Conclusion.

In the succession decree issued by ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī which appointed his grandson Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl over his sons were the seeds of future political schism. The remaining two sons of the founder, ʿAlī and al-Ḥasan, seemingly did not accept the decision of their father. After his death, they murdered their nephew, the emir Abū Sinān. Thus, began the period of political unrest and division (1130s-*c*.1200 CE), as the emirate experienced a severe internal conflict among the branch of al-Faḍl, the branch of ʿAlī and the branch of al-Ḥasan. This conflict required the subsequent emirs to ally with the tribal force of the ʿUqaylids, and occasionally with the Kīshids, in order to consolidate their power against their rival emirs; hence, leading to the demise of the emirate. The influence of the ʿUqaylids over the emirs and the emirate increased gradually. The emirs began to pay them large sums of money and grant them vast lands in order to secure their support and loyalty. The ʿUqaylids achieved high level of influence, to the extent that they murdered emirs and appointed others.

During the short period of recovery and reunification (*c*.1200-*c*.1220) under the emir Shukr ibn Manṣūr and his successor, the emir Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad from the branch of al-Faḍl, the emirate was characterised by its central authority and military influence over Arabia and South Iraq. The emir Muḥammad used his genealogical relationship with the ʿUqaylids, who were his maternal uncles, and further consolidated this relationship by marrying the sister of the ʿUqaylids' leader. Using all of these advantages, he succeeded in controlling the three main towns of Baḥrayn, and then expanded his power and influence into the deserts. He also established a strong relationship with the Caliph al-Nāṣir, providing the Caliphate with an important service by protecting the pilgrimage routes in the Iraqi and Najdi deserts. However,

[351] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 727, n.168.
[352] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1295.

this was not effective enough to halt the deterioration of the emirate and to stop the political rivalry between the emirs and the ʿUqaylids.

An internal conflict occurred among the ʿUqaylids themselves, perhaps due to their marginalisation within the emirate. The rebellious branch was led by Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān, who killed the emir Muḥammad and installed another emir, named Ghurayr ibn al-Ḥasan, and acquired a significant sums of money and lots of properties owned by the emirate. After this, there began a period of weakness which led to the end of the emirate. The crisis was deepened when the son of the emir Muḥammad, al-Faḍl, killed Ghurayr with the support of ʿAbbāsid forces and became the emir, but surrendered control of many islands and villages to the ruler of Kīsh, in addition to more than half of Baḥrayn's income. At the same time, Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra and his son ʿUṣfūr became the rulers of al-Aḥsāʾ. The emirate was also lost in al-Qaṭīf, but Uwāl survived longer with the last ʿUyūnid emir Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad, who was defeated and killed by the army of the Atābeg of Fārs, Abū Bakr al-Salghūrī, in 1236 CE.

The occasional contacts between the peripheral area of Baḥrayn and the Caliphate in Iraq occurred at times of crisis in a context of an ʿAbbāsid quest to reassert itself by establishing relations with regional independent polities. The ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir needed a powerful polity that could supervise the passage of caravans in the deserts, while some ʿUyūnid emirs sought the Caliphate's recognition which would serve them in local politics and protect them from Kīshid and Salghūrid naval raids. However, the ʿAbbāsids' influence was ineffective and could not change the pattern of local fragmentation and frequent invasions from outside which led the emirate to collapse. The key factors in the fall of the ʿUyūnid emirate were the severe internal divisions within the ruling family, neglect of maritime projects, weak military forces, lack of political centrality and economic sovereignty and above all the nomadic ʿUqaylids' political and economic domination in al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf.

Chapter Five:

Baḥrayn under the ʿUqaylid Emirate and the Iranian-based Polities 1230s–*c.*1400 CE

1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the history of the region of Baḥrayn from the 1230s CE to *c.*1400 CE. Baḥrayn was divided between two powers, one local and the other external. Local power was held by the nomadic tribe of the ʿUqaylids (1230s-1350s CE), who overcame the Uyūnid emirate and imposed their power on the inner parts of Baḥrayn: al-Aḥsāʾ, the deserts and the small oases of the region, as well as central Arabia. They forged an alliance with the Mamlūks, which significantly affected the emirate politically and economically. On the other hand, external power was held by Iranian-based polities, which annexed the island of Uwāl and the city of al-Qaṭīf. These Baḥraynī cities successively and sometime alternately came under the Salghūrid dynasty, who were the Atābegs of Fārs (1236-*c.*1270s CE), followed by the Mongols' vassals (1270s-1280s CE), the King of Hormuz Maḥmūd al-Qalhātī (*c.*1280s-1290s CE), the Ṭībid dynasty (1290s-1333 CE), then the Kingdom of Hormuz (*c.*1335-1470s CE). Because most of these polities were based on maritime trade, they engaged in economic, political and naval confrontations regarding supremacy over the Gulf trade.[353] The control of Baḥrayn's seaports, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, was important for three main reasons: first, their locations on the Gulf were strategic; second, their access to the pearl fisheries; third, the prevention of local polities from forming a rival power. These Iranian-based polities, especially the earlier ones, as discussed in Chapter One, enriched the Gulf by restoring the trade activities to the Gulf from the Red Sea. Although the adjective 'Iranian' is used to designate the external polities that ruled from the province of Persia (Fārs), the island of Kīsh and Hormuz, none of the polities was in fact Persian. They were reported to have been Turkmen (the Salghūrids), Mongols (Sūghūnjāq) and Arabs (the Qayṣarids of Kīsh, the Ṭībid dynasty and the Kingdom of Hormuz).

[353] Their situation had some similarities with the Italian mercantile states of Venice, Genoa, Ragusa, Pisa and Amalfi, which were in political, economic and military confrontations since 10th century over the trade of the Mediterranean. See for example Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988)

This period of Islamic history saw the emergence of the Mongols, who conquered the Islamic East and overthrew the last ʿAbbāsid Caliph in Baghdād, ending the Islamic Caliphate in Iraq in 1258 CE and establishing the Mongol Ilkhānate in Iran (1256-1335 CE). The period also coincided with the emergence of the Baḥrī Mamlūks in Egypt (1250-1382 CE), followed by the Burjī Mamlūks (1382-1517 CE). The Baḥrī Mamlūks, who brought down the Ayyūbids (1174-1250 CE), claimed to be the political, military and cultural defender of Islam against the Mongols, with whom they were engaged in a long war (1260-1323 CE), which facilitated the formation and legitimisation of the Mamlūk Sultanate.[354] These events played a pivotal role in shaping the course of events in the region of Baḥrayn and influenced its political entity, the ʿUqaylid emirate. This emirate, in contrast to the ʿUyūnid emirate, was seriously involved with the great powers of the Near East. This is perhaps because of the ʿUqaylids' nomadism and their control on overland routes which linked to neighbouring empires, whereas the ʿUyūnid emirate was a polity based on agriculture.

Previous studies on the Iranian-based polities of the Gulf during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are relatively abundant. The most notable studies are written by Jean Aubin,[355] Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī,[356] Piacentini,[357] Spuler[358] and Willem Floor.[359] However, the island of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf within these polities were discussed only superficially.

There is little information on the history of the ʿUqaylids in Baḥrayn in that particular period, which has not been studied at length by Western scholars, who have only written short encyclopaedic entries.[360] This chapter is the first to introduce a detailed history of the ʿUqaylids in Baḥrayn in English. The history has also received comparatively little attention from Arab scholars. The latest work was written by Khalil (2006), which included no substantial

[354] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamlūks: The Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War, 1260-1281* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-2, 18.
[355] Jean Aubin, 'Les Princes d'Ormuz du XIIIe au XVe Siècle,' *Journal Asiatique* 240 (1953):77-138.
[356] Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya* (Raʾs al-Khaima: Markaz al-Dirasāt wa-l-Wathāʾiq, 1999).
[357] Valeria Fiorani Piacentini, 'The Mercantile Empire of the Ṭībīs: Economic Predominance, Political Power, Military subordination', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, 34, Papers from the thirty-seventh meeting of the Seminar for Arabian Studies held in London, 17-19 July 2003 (2004): 251-260.
[358] B. Spuler, 'Atabakan-e Fars', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, online.
[359] Willem Floor, 'Hormuz ii. Islamic Period' in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.
[360] See Rentz and Mulligan, 'al-Baḥrayn', *EI*^{2}; G.R. Smith, ''Uṣfūrids', *EI*^{2}; Ḥasan al-Naboodah, 'Bahrain' in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Josef Meri (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2006), vol.1, 95.

arguments.[361] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān (1979) was the founder of this study. He wrote a pioneering and a detailed academic study on the ʿUqaylid/ʿUṣfūrid emirate in Arabic, entitled *Imārat al-ʿuṣfūriyyīn wa-dawruha al-siyāsī fī tārīkh sharq al-jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*. He constructs the history of Baḥrayn during that period, using a large number of fragments gleaned from many primary sources. He places the history of Baḥrayn in the context of the Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War of 1260–1323 CE, showing the role of the ʿUqaylid emirate in that war.[362] He also focused on the rule of the Iranian-based polities in the seaports of Baḥrayn.

Al-Ḥumaydān did not use the name ''Uqaylid' to identify the nomadic dynasty that ruled Baḥrayn. Instead, he named it the ''Uṣfūrid dynasty'. He may have followed earlier modern historians, such as Āl ʿAbdulqādir (1960) and Rentz and Mulligan (1960s), who derived it from the name 'Banū ʿUṣfūr' given by Ibn Khaldūn. In his chronicle, the latter quoted a source revealing that Banū ʿUṣfūr were the rulers of Baḥrayn in 1253 CE. It is true that the founder of the ʿUqaylid emirate was ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid. However, the leadership of the tribe shifted later to other branches of the ʿUqaylid tribe, as recorded in other sources. I suggest that the designation, 'the ʿUqaylid emirate', is more accurate than 'the ʿUṣfūrid emirate'.

In order to compensate for the shortage of primary sources and to seek deeper insight into the ʿUqaylid emirate, this study implements different methodologies. It uses parallel examples of nomadic polities in northern Syria and northern Iraq, which existed in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. These examples might help to gain an understanding of the ʿUqaylid polity in Baḥrayn and its role between the neighbouring empires. Moreover, theories of social anthropology will be utilised in this historical study in order to understand several aspects of the ʿUqaylid tribal community. For example, the theories developed by Lancaster and Gellner on leadership and hierarchical system within the tribal communities, the theory of 'dimorphic state' developed by Rowton are useful and seem to fit well with the short historical reports on the ʿUqaylids. In fact, because of the research's use of such approaches, many of the conclusions made in this chapter will be hypothetical. Furthermore, because of the absence of local sources

[361] Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 355-432.

[362] The article has been published in three journals. I will use the latest one. ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn wa-Dawruha al-Siyāsī fī Tārīkh Sharq al-Jazīra al-'Arabiyya,' a*l-Watheekah* 3, 2 (1982): 26-74. It was first published in *Majallat Kulliyat al-Adab, Jami'at al-Baṣra* 15 (1979): 69-140, and then in *Majallat al-ʿArab* 15 1/2 (1980): 65-115.

and the reliance on outside sources, we will have more information about the external affairs of Baḥrayn.

The chapter argues that the region of Baḥrayn during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was heavily influenced by events in the Near East, particularly the Mamlūk-Mongol War (1260-1323 CE), as well as the war between the Gulf polities over maritime trade. These two regional phenomena, on one hand, resulted in the integration of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf into the maritime trade network and their political subjection to alternate rival polities based in Iran. On the other hand, the Mamlūk-Mongol War shaped the socio-political and economic role of the nomads of Baḥrayn and central Arabia, particularly the ʿUqaylids, who were employed in this war in military missions in Arabia. After the end of the war, the ʿUqaylids transformed from mere confederated tribal pastoralists and military warriors into professional caravan merchants. This transformation was a result of the recently flourishing economy of the Gulf, including al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl, which coincided with the Mamlūks' trade strategy and demand for certain goods from Arabia and the East. The ʿUqaylids developed an extensive inland trade network and practiced international transit trade, which was perhaps similar to that of the ancient Gerrhaeans and Nabataeans. They re-established a large-scale overland trade activity that became later open to many merchants of Arabia, who practiced it until the discovery and exportation of oil by modern states of Arabia in 1940s. They were famously known as 'al-ʿUqaylāt merchants'.

In the Persian sources, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf received far less attention than the seaports of Kīsh, Hormuz, and Qalhāt. The same could be said about the representation of the region of Baḥrayn and its people/tribes in the Arabic Mamlūk sources. They were mentioned less often than the tribes of Syria were. This clearly reflects Baḥrayn's marginality and peripherality.

Figure 13:

Chronology of the Salghūrid Atābegs who ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf (1236- *c.*1282 CE):

1231-1260	Qutlugh Khān Abū Bakr ibn Saʿd ibn Zingī ibn Mawdūd. He conquered Uwāl in 1236 CE and al-Qaṭīf in 1244 CE.[1]
1260 CE	Saʿd ibn Abī Bakr ibn Saʿd ibn Zingī ibn Mawdūd. He became ill and died 12 days after his father.
1260-1262	Muḥammad ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Bakr ibn Saʿd ibn Zingī ibn Mawdūd. He was a child, whose mother, Turkān Khātūn, who was the sister of the atābegs of Yazd, ruled as a regent for two years and seven months until her son Muḥammad died.
1263	Muḥammad Shāh ibn Salghūr shāh ibn Saʿd ibn Zingī ibn Mawdūd. He ruled after his cousin for eight months, until he was defeated and imprisoned by Turkān Khātūn.
1263	Seljūq shāh ibn Salghūr shāh ibn Saʿd ibn Zingī ibn Mawdūd. He killed Turkān Khātūn and ruled Fārs for five months. Later, he was imprisoned by the Ilkhānids.
1263-c.1282	Abīsh Khātūn bint Saʿd ibn Abī Bakr ibn Saʿd ibn Zingī ibn Mawdūd. She was the daughter of Turkān Khātūn and the last Salghūrid ruler. She ruled independently for one year, then she married Mengu Timūr ibn Hulagu Khan. They became the vassals of Hulagu in Fārs for about twenty years. During these years, she lived in Azerbaijān while the actual rulers of Fārs were the Ilkhānids. After the murder of her husband in a battle against the Mamlūks in 1281 CE, Fārs officially fell under rule of the Ilkhānids.

[1] Three primary sources give three different dates or number of ruling years, Baiḍāwī writes that Abū Bakr ruled for 35 years which means 663/1256. Qazwīnī reports Abū Bakr's death to have been in *Jumāda al-Ūlā* 658 A.H. [1269 CE] and Vassāf informs that he died in 659/1261 when he was 70 years old. I will choose 1260 CE because Mustawfī Qazwīnī gave a specific month which indicates that he may have had accurate information on this regard. He also offers specific months for the death of later atābegs. See Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh Guzīde*, pp.506-7; Nāṣir al-Dīn Baiḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh*, p.123; ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh Vaṣṣāf*, p.106.

2. The Rule of the Iranian-based Polities over Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf *c*.1230-*c*.1400 CE

2.1 The Salghūrid rule over Uwāl (1236-1282 CE) and al-Qaṭīf (1244-1282 CE)

The Salghūrid Atābegate in Persia/Fārs was founded in 1148 CE, but rose to prominence in 1229 CE as a regional power based on maritime trade after they vanquished the Qayṣarid dynasty on the island of Kīsh. This status was maintained and protected by their naval force. The Salghūrid dynasty was of Turkmen origin. It belonged to the Salūr or Salghūr tribe, which was part of the major tribe of the Oghuz. The founder of this dynasty was Sunqur ibn Mawdūd, who exploited the political unrest in Fārs following the wars between the Turkmen before establishing his Atābegate in 1148 CE. During the reign of his brother Zangī (r.1161-1175/8 CE), the Atābegate was ratified by the Seljūq Sultan Arslān Shāh ibn Ṭughril (r.1160-1176 CE). The dynasty was perpetual vassals to overlords: the Seljūqs, the Khawārizmians, and then the Mongols until *c*.1282 CE. However, in some periods, the Salghūrids enjoyed autonomy and prospered, especially under Saʿd ibn Zangī (1198-1231), who paid allegiance to the shāhs of Khawārizm and reinforced the alliance by means of marriage. His son Abū Bakr ibn Saʿd (r.1231-1260 CE) embarked on a maritime project by conquering the key islands and seaports in the Persian and Omanī Gulfs including Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. There, his name was read in the Friday prayers and sermons, the *khuṭba*. These seaports formed a network of transit trade.[363] Abū Bakr was a patron of many scholars, Sufis and poets, most importantly the famous poet Saʿdī Shīrāzī (d.1294). He also built many mosques and madrasas. He rebuilt the shrines of the *awliyāʾ*, such as that of Sheikh Kabīr Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Khafīf al-Shīrāzī (d.982 CE). When Hulagu established the Ilkhānate, Abū Bakr paid allegiance to him. The Atābeg, accordingly, received the title of Qutlugh Khān. The Salghūrids dominated the maritime trade in the Gulf for much of the period between 1231 and *c*.1282 CE.[364]

In subjugating the ʿUyūnid Uwāl, the Atābeg Abū Bakr ordered his vassal Sayf al-Dīn Abū Naṣr/Naḍar, the king of Hormuz, to occupy the island of Kīsh and to give the Atābegate one

[363] For primary sources on the Salghūrids see Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddith (Tehrān: Bunyād Mawqūfāt Doctor Afshār, 1282 [2003]), 119-127; ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 86-105; Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh-e Guzīde*, 501-507; For secondary literature on the Salghūrid atābegs see C.E. Bosworth, 'Salghurids', *EI*[2]; C.E. Bosworth, *The Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), vol.5, 172-3; Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran: Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220-1350* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955), 117-121.

[364] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 100-105; Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh Guzīde*, 506; Ralph Kauz, 'The Maritime trade of Kish', 55-57.

third of its tax revenue. After he succeeded in this mission, however, Sayf al-Dīn refused to fulfil his agreement with the Atābeg, who consequently toppled and killed the former in 1230 CE. Vaṣṣāf writes that on the third of *Dhū al-Ḥijja* 633 [August 1236 CE], Abū Bakr invaded Uwāl, defeated and expelled the last ʿUyūnid emir.[365]

In order to subjugate al-Qaṭīf, the Atābeg launched a maritime expedition and its seaport of Tārūt in the spring of 1244 CE. He successfully occupied it and killed its ʿUqaylid emir, Abū ʿĀṣim ibn Sirḥān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿĀmir [ʿUmayra] ibn Sinān, apparently a relative of ʿUṣfūr. The ʿUqaylids then made frequent raids on al-Qaṭīf causing many problems for the Salghūrids, who were then compelled to pay a tribute to the ʿUqaylids. The historian Vaṣṣāf explains that 'during the harvest season, the Atābeg paid the Bedouins in dates as well as twelve thousand Egyptian [Ayyūbid?] dinars.'[366]

Lowick confirms that normal trade activities existed between Uwāl and Iran based on archaeological evidence related to the Salghūrids in Uwāl. The Danish archaeological mission to the island of Baḥrain (Uwāl) (1953–1965) found on the surface two coins that belonged to the Salghūrid Atābegs. The first coin, according to Lowick, was made of lead and belonged to one of the Atābegs. Although the place of minting does not appear on the coin, he suggests that it may have been minted on the island of Uwāl between 1236 and 1253 CE. However, he did not provide a reason for his hypothesis. The second coin was made of copper and belonged to the last Salghūrid Atābeg, Abīsh ibn Saʿd with Abaqa [son of Hulagu] as overlord (1263–1282 CE).[367]

Two questions remain unanswered. The first concerns whether the city of al-Aḥsāʾ was also occupied by the Salghūrids; and the second is, whether the Salghūrids withdrew from al-Qaṭīf later and handed the city to the ʿUqaylids as reported Vaṣṣāf. Regarding al-Aḥsāʾ, the historian Vaṣṣāf and an earlier historian, Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, in his *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh* (1275 CE) did not mention it as being occupied by the Salghūrids.[368] However, later sources, such as

[365] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra*, 104-5; Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh*, 123; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1295. See also the previous chapter.

[366] One might wonder why a ruler of a polity that is based on commercial activity like the Salghūrids paid in Egyptian (Perhaps Fāṭimid or Ayyūbid?) coins rather than their own Persian or at least Indian coins.

[367] Nicholas Lowick, 'Trade Patterns on the Persian Gulf', 319-333. These coins are preserved in the Forhistorik Museum, Aarhus, Denmark.

[368] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 105-106; Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh*, 123.

Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī (1330 CE), Aḥmad Ghaffārī (d.1565 CE) and Munajjim Bāshī (d.1702 CE), listed the city of al-Aḥsāʾ among the cities occupied by the Salghūrids.[369] The preferable view is perhaps the first because of the sources's proximity to the events and the authors' ability to access information due to their association with the ruling courts. As we have seen, Vaṣṣāf provides more details about Abū Bakr's expedition, such as the names of the ʿUqaylid leaders and the amount of money that Abū Bakr paid, which suggests that he had access to information that was not available to Qazwīnī. Moreover, al-Aḥsāʾ was an inland town surrounded by desert, so it is unlikely that the Salghūrids entered this area and defeated the Bedouins in their territory. Al-Aḥsāʾ seems to have been already ruled by Banū ʿUṣfūr in 1253 CE, as reported by Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī (d.1275).[370] Therefore, al-Aḥsāʾ is not likely to have been occupied by Abū Bakr. The name of al-Aḥsāʾ was inaccurately recorded by Qazwīnī, Ghaffārī and Munajjim Bāshī, whose information was not as detailed as that of Vaṣṣāf.

Regarding the withdrawal from al-Qaṭīf, the sources are contradictory. Vaṣṣāf (1328 CE) writes that 'in 654 [A.H.] [1256 CE] [the Atābeg] gave the rule there [al-Qaṭīf] to ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid ibn ʿUmair[a] and Māniʿ ibn ʿAlī ibn Mājid ibn ʿUmair[a].'[371] Later historians, such as Aḥmad Ghaffārī (d.1565 CE) and Munajjim Bāshī (d.1702 CE) also record the same piece of information.[372] However, the earlier historian Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, in his *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* (1275 CE), and Vaṣṣāf's contemporaneous historian Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī (1281-1349 CE), in his *Tārīkh guzīde* (1330 CE) do not mention the withdrawal. Qazwīnī writes that Abū Bakr ruled Fārs, Kīsh, Baḥrayn [Uwāl], al-Qaṭīf and al-Aḥsāʾ for thirty years [i.e. until his death 1260 CE].'[373] It might be possible that Abū Bakr indeed gave al-Qaṭīf back to the ʿUqaylids, but the later Salghūrid Atābegs or the subsequent polities recaptured the coastal town. Al-Qaṭīf appears in later sources as being under the later Salghūrids, Mongols, Ṭībids and Hormuzians, as discussed below.

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[369] Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh Guzīde*, 506; ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 44 cites Aḥmad Ghaffārī, *Tārīkh Jahān Arā* (Tehrān: 1964), 126-7; and Munajjim Bāshī, MS. *Jāmiʿ al-Duwal*, 646-7.
[370] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Maʿrifat Ansāb al-ʿArab*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1980), 106-107, 366; Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Qalāʾid al-Jummān fīʾl-Taʿrīf bi-Qabāʾil ʿArab al-Zamān*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (al-Qāhira: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī, 1982), 120.
[371] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 105-106.
[372] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 44 cited Aḥmad Ghaffārī, *Tārīkh-e Jahān Arā*, 126-7: and Munajjim Bāshī, MS. *Jāmiʿ al-Duwal*, 646-7.
[373] Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Tārīkh Guzīde*, 506.

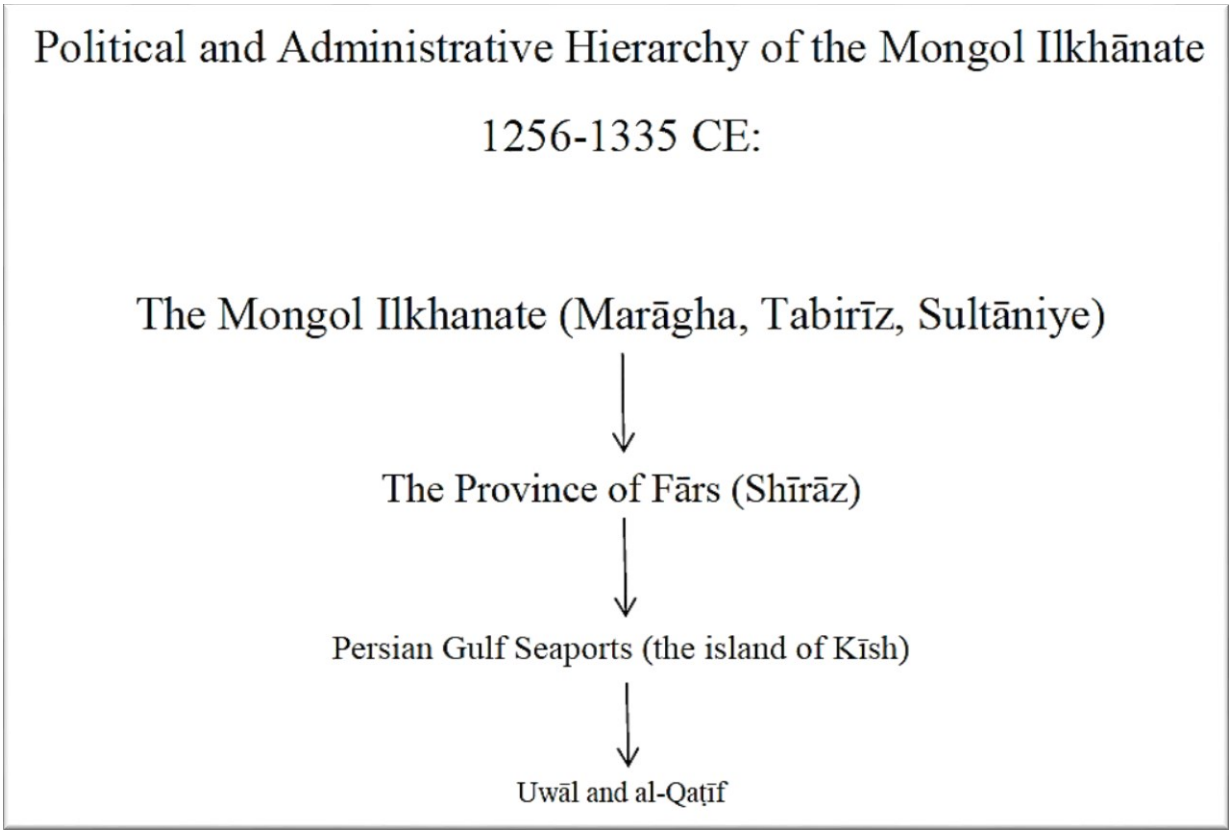

Figure 14: The hierarchical position of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf within the Mongol Ilkhānate.

2.2 Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf under the Mongol Rule: Sūghūnjāq and the Ṭībids (1272-*c.*1335 CE).

The province of Fārs and its territories, including the islands of the Gulf came under the Mongol generals of the Ilkhānids after the death of Mengu Timūr ibn Hulegu, who was the husband of the last Atābeg of the Salghūrid dynasty Abīsh Khātūn (*c.*1282 CE). Even before that date, the Mongols were the actual rulers of Fārs. Several officials ruled Fārs in the midst of political turbulence and wars between the Mongols, such as Ankyānū, Bulghān, Tūnyāq, Muḥammad Beg, and Sūghūnjāq Nūʾīn. The latter, who perhaps was the most important, was previously a military commander who led an army unit and participated with Hulagu in the siege and

conquest of Baghdād in 1257-8 CE.[374] Abaqa Khān ibn Hulagu (r.1265-1282 CE), who was the second Ilkhān, appointed Sūghūnjāq in 1272 CE as the governor of Baghdād and the province of Fārs with its territories, including Uwāl. As governor, he was responsible for collecting taxes, policing and leading battles against rival polities and rebels. He was in power until the death of his overlord Arghūn Khān ibn Abaqa in 1291 CE.[375] Sūghūnjāq is reported to have been a Christian.[376]

Vaṣṣāf writes that in 1273 CE, Sūghūnjāq sent envoys to Baḥrayn (Uwāl) and Khūrshīf [in Oman] to arrange ships and gather an army of Mongols and Muslims in order to fight Maḥmūd al-Qalhātī [1247–1286 CE], the founder king of Hormuz, who had captured Kīsh. Maḥmūd was defeated and expelled from the island.[377] This short report shows that the island was ruled by Fārs in 1273 CE, that is, before the end of the Salghūrid dynasty, which suggests that the Ilkhānids were the *de facto* rulers of Uwāl although it was officially under the Salghūrid Atābeg Abīsh Khātūn. This report also indicates that Uwāl was home to shipbuilders and to have accommodated Mongol troops.

The historians Shabānkāre (*c*.1343 CE) and Naṭnazī (1413 CE) again provide peculiar information regarding Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf which differs from the aforementioned information of Vaṣṣāf. They write that al-Qalhātī occupied not only Kīsh but also Baḥrayn [Uwāl] and al-Qaṭīf, which is doubtful.[378] Aubin does not accept this story from Naṭnazī and Shabānkāre. He explains that it would have been difficult for al-Qalhātī to reconquer all these islands after his defeat by the Mongols [in 1273 CE].[379]

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[374] ʿAbdulrazzāq ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-Jāmiʿa waʾl-Tajārib al-Nāfiʿa fiʾl-Miʾa al-Sābiʿa*, ed. Muṣṭāfā Jawād (Beirut: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Mawsūʿāt, 2013), 271-272; ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 17; Muḥammad Mūsā Hindāwī, *Saʿdī al-Shīrazī: Shāʿir al-Insāniyya* (al-Qāhira: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1951), 175-178.
[375] Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawarīkh*, 132-3; ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 67, 113-114, 118-120.
[376] Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Muʿjam al-Shuyūkh*, ed. Rawḥiyya al-Suyūfī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1990), 387.
[377] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 114.
[378] Maʿīn al-Dīn Naṭnazī, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh Maʿīnī*, ed. Jean Aubin (Tehrān: Kitāb Furūshī Khayyām, 1336/1957), 12; Jean Aubin edited parts of Muḥammad Shabankāre's *Majmaʿ al-Ansāb* in Jean Aubin, 'Extraits Du Majmaʿu-ʾl-Ansāb Concernant Ormuz,' *Journal Asiatique* 241 (1953): 129-136.
[379] Jean Aubin, 'Les Princes D'Ormuz Du XIII AU XV Siecle', *Journal Asiatique* 241 (1953): 81.

Chronology of the Ṭībids who ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf (1291-*c*.1335 CE)

1291-1295 CE	Jamal al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭībī or ibn al-Sawāmlī (d.1307 CE). He was appointed by the Mongol Ilkhān Gaykhatu (r.1291–1295 CE) as governor of Fārs. Ibrāhīm entrusted his son Fakhr al-Dīn to rule the islands of the Persian Gulf in *c*. 1295 CE. In 1298, Ibrāhīm was summoned to the Ilkhān's court to undergo an investigation into the alleged corruption regarding revenues. He was removed from Fārs, but kept Kīsh and perhaps the islands of the Persian Gulf. In 1305 CE, the administration of Fārs was restored to him. He paid the ʿUqaylids in al-Qaṭīf the same annual amount of money that had been paid by the Salghūrids. He made al-Qaṭīf, where he bred his horses, the base of his horse business.
1295-1300 CE	Fakhr al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm Muḥammad al-Ṭībī. He engaged in a battle with king Ayāz of Hormuz. He left his administrative post when the Ilkhān Maḥmūd Ghāzān ordered him to organise a diplomatic mission to Khāqān Timūr in China in 1300 CE. He stayed there for two years but died at sea while returning from the mission.
1300-?	Jamāl al-Dīn Naʿīm. Perhaps the most important event in his reign was his sale of the island of Jārūn to King Ayāz of Hormuz (d.1312) in 1300, which would later become the new Hormuz, the capital of the Kingdom of Hormuz.
1313-1325	ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbdulaziz. He waged a war against the Hormuzian king ʿIzz al-Dīn Kirdānshāh (1312-1318 CE) and invaded Hormuz. Kirdānshāh agreed to pay an annual tribute to him. The rule lasted four years 1313-1317 CE. He was executed by Dimshiq Khawāja ibn Amīr Jūbān. During his time, an inscription was engraved in Baḥrayn in 1324 CE, celebrating the building of a minaret in the al-Khamīs Mosque.
1325-1342	Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Fakhr al-Dīn Aḥmad. He appointed his brother as his deputy. They were killed by the king of Hormuz Tahmatan II ibn Kirdānshāh (r.1320-1346 CE).
1342-1345	Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad. He perhaps lost Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf to the king of Hormuz Tahmatan II ibn Kirdānshāh (r.1320-1346 CE) in *c*.1335.

Figure 15: Chronology of the Ṭībids who ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf (1291-*c*.1335 CE)

The Ṭībids, a family of merchants and governors under the Ilkhāns, rose to prominence when they were appointed as governors by the Ilkhānids beginning with Gaykhatu (r.1291–1295 CE). The founder of the family, Jamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭībī or Ibn al-Sawāmlī was from Iraq and was described as the head of merchants, *raʾīs al-tujjār*. Among the various items he traded were horses, pearls and perhaps perfumes, as his *nisba Ṭīb* indicates.

The fifth Ilkhān Gaykhatu, who depended on Arabs and Persians instead of Mongol leaders to rule the provinces, entrusted Jamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm with the governorship of Baghdād and the province of Fārs, including the islands of the Gulf for a term of four years. This Ilkhān succeeded Arghūn Khan, who had appointed Sūghūnjāq. Gaykhatu also bestowed the title of *malik al-Islām* on Jamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Ṭībī. In exchange, al-Ṭībī paid an annual amount of one thousand *tūmān* (Gold Liras). Al-Ṭībī's main base for his trade network, which extended to India and China, was the island of Kīsh. His brother ʿAbdulraḥmān, who was based in South India, and his sons, Sirāj al-Dīn ʿUmar, ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Fakhr al-Dīn Aḥmad and Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, helped him rule and direct their territories. Fakhr al-Dīn Aḥmad was responsible for the seaports of the Gulf, which might have included Uwāl. Fakhr al-Dīn was later replaced in 1300 CE by another official named Jamāl al-Dīn Naʿīm, who sold the island of Jārūn to the king Ayāz of Hormuz (d.1312 CE). The latter established it as his new Hormuz, replacing the mainland town. Aḥmad's two brothers, ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, succeeded him, respectively.[380]

Jamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm made contact with the ʿUqaylids in Baḥrayn. Vaṣṣāf writes that he agreed to pay the same amount of money that the Salghūrids used to pay to the local leaders of Baḥrayn in order to protect his merchandise and the enormous number of his horses that were bred in the Baḥraynī town.[381] Seemingly, al-Qaṭīf was important to al-Ṭībī for its seaport and its crops which were suitable for his horse trading business. The ʿUqaylids, as discussed below, benefited from the horse trading business.

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[380] Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī fiʾl-Wafayāt* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2000), vol.6, 89; ʿAbdulrazzāq ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *al-Ḥawādith al-Jāmiʿa*, 418, 424; Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya*, 126-127; Valeria Fiorani Piacentini, 'The Mercantile Empire of the Ṭībīs: Economic Predominance, Political Power, Military subordination', 251-260.

[381] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 186.

The Danish archaeological mission also discovered a coin which is estimated to have been minted in 1292 CE. Lowick studied this coin which reads *Bādishāh ʻĀlam* (the king of the world) in the first line, and *Āl Abū Saʿīd* in the second line.[382] Perhaps the title *Bādishāh ʻĀlam* is equivalent to the title *malik al-Islām*.

In 1296 CE, the seventh Ilkhān, Maḥmūd Ghāzān (1295-1304 CE) renewed Jamāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm's political and administrative post and added al-Baṣra and Wāṣiṭ to his territories. Thus, adding another seaport and linking it overland with inner Iraq. However, during this period, Ibrāhīm engaged in several battles against his economic and political rival; the kingdom of Hormuz over the seaports of the Gulf.

The Ilkhānate ceased its political and military patronage for the Ṭībid family members, who began to fight over the legacy of their father, who died in Shīrāz in 1307 CE. The Hormuzian kingdom defeated the Ṭībids in *c*.1335 CE, which is the year of the Ilkhānate's collapse.[383]

During the Ṭībid period, Uwāl's internal events did not attract the attention of historians. However, in the old capital of Uwāl, Bilād al-Qadīm, there is an archaeological inscription in the Masjid al-Khamīs. The inscription is in the mosque keeper's room, which is at the base of the second minaret. The date on the inscription is 1323/4 CE. According to Kalus, the inscription is written in the centre of a curved stone, 61 cm (56 cm in the broken area in the top left) x 20 cm x 11 cm (6 cm to the left and 8 cm to the right). Three lines are separated by a strip; the line in cursive script is 5.5 cm wide; the circular shape of the letter T *tā marbūṭa,* is shaped like the reversed Greek letter *omega*. Kalus and his colleagues provided a cursory translation:[384]

(1) امر بعمارة هاذه المنارة المباركة السيد المعظم المخدوم (؟)

(2) محي الجهاد (؟) xxx

(3) xxx سنة اربع وعشرين وسبعمائة

(1) The construction of this blessed minaret is ordered by the served man, the great, the master (?)

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[382] Nicholas Lowick, 'Trade Patterns on the Persian Gulf", 319-333.

[383] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 186; Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrāhīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya*, 126.

[384] Kalus and his collegues were confused between *ʿashara* (number ten) and *ʿishrīn* (twenty). See Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 27.

(2) The reviver of *jihād* (?) xxx

(3) xxx the year seven hundred and twenty four [1323/4 CE]

Perhaps this inscription was engraved during the time of the Ṭībīd ruler, ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Ibrāhīm (r.1313-1325 CE). During his rule, he waged a war against King Kirdānshāh of Hormuz (r.1313-1317 CE), because Kirdānshāh was attacking the ships that came from India and preventing them from docking at the Ṭībīd seaports. This war resulted in the submission of the Hormuzian king, who agreed to pay an annual tribute to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ṭībī.[385] I do not argue that this inscription celebrates ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's victory or that it is undoubtedly related to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. I only present the historical context of the time of the inscription, which the archaeologists did not discuss. The name of the ruler could not be read in the inscription. This inscription may suggest that this mysterious ruler was a top official, because he was able to organise and lead an army and fight a religious war, or *jihād*. This term, which connotes a military struggle, is used mainly for wars against non-Muslims. During this period, the Mongols were largely non-Muslims or superficial Muslims, although the first influential Mongol leader to have converted to Islam was perhaps Maḥmūd Ghāzān in 1295 CE, thirty years before the year of this inscription.[386] Does this inscription infer that a Muslim ruler declared *jihād* against the Mongols when they took Baḥrayn even before the Ṭībids, that is, Sūghūnjāq who was a Christian? Was that anonymous ruler a Shīʿī governor or a Sunni? If he were a Sunni, it is interesting to speculate on the coexistence between his inscription and the inscription next to it, which includes the names of the twelve Imāms of the Twelver Shīʿites.[387] If the ruler were a Shīʿī Twelver, it would be also interesting that the concept of *jihād* existed in this period of the doctrine's history, when it was not applied in other places because of the occultation of the twelfth Imām. Unfortunately, the inscription is difficult to read, according to Kalus, and we do not have other evidence, whether archaeological or written, that addresses these puzzling questions.

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[385] Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya*, 136-138.

[386] He was preceded in the conversion by Aḥmad Teguder (1282-1284 CE). There is a long list of scholarship on Mongol conversion to Islam. See, for instance, Reuven Amitai-Preiss, 'Ghazan, Islam and Mongol tradition: A View from the Mamlūk Sultanate,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 59/1 (1996): 1-10; Judith Pfeiffer, 'Reflections on a 'Double Rapprochement': Conversion to Islam among the Mongol Elite During the Early Ilkhanate,' in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 369-389.

[387] See Chapter Three, the section of Abū Sinān.

Another inscription exists in a mosque in the village of Barbār in Uwāl and is dated in 1329 CE during the Ṭībid period. It is a construction text of a mosque that reads the name of the ruler who was the vizier al-mawlā al-ṣāḥib al-muʿaẓẓam al-akram al-mukarram malik al-wuzarāʾ fī al-ʿālamayn Shams al-Dunyā wa-al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Saʿīd ibn Maʿālī. This ruler may have been the Ṭībid governor of Uwāl and the islands of the Gulf, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Sawāmlī, who governed between 1325 and 1342 CE. The two names Saʿīd ibn Maʿālī might either be incorrect reading of Ibrāhīm ibn al-Sawāmlī or that they are not names but epithets that mean the happy or His Excellency and His Highness. In any case, according to Kalus, the inscription reads:[388]

(1) امر بعمارة هذا المسجد الشريف المولى الصاحب المعظم الاكرم المكرم ملك الوزراء في العالمين

(2) شمس الدنيا والدين محمد بن أحمد بن سعيد بن معالى ادام الله معاليه متقربا بذال [كذا] إلى الله تعالى وكملت لد اخرها (؟)

(3) شعبان المبارك من شهور سنة تسع وعشرين وسبعائة و(؟) الحمد لله وحده وصلى الله على محمد النبي xxx (=و سلم (؟

(1) The construction of this holy mosque is ordered by the al-mawlā al-ṣāḥib the great the generous the king of viziers in the two realms

(2) Shams al-Dunyā wa-al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Saʿīd ibn Maʿālī as a gift for God Completed

(3) on the month of Shaʿbān of the year seven hundred and twenty nine praise be to God alone and peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad

[388] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 68-69, pl. LI.

Chronology of the Kings of Hormuz who ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf (*c*.1335-1400 CE)

c.1335-1346 CE	Tahmatan II ibn Kirdānshāh (r.1320-1346 CE). He conquered Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf after the death of the Ilkhān Khudābanda Abū Saʿīd (1316-1335 CE), but the exact date is unknown.
1340s-1346 CE	Shādī and Shanbā the sons of Kīqbād took Uwāl from Tahmatan II. They came into conflict with each other, and Shanbā left Uwāl for the town of Fāl near Shīrāz.
1346-1377 CE	Tūrān Shāh ibn Tahmatan II. He defeated Shādī, but left Shādī's son; Fūlān ibn Shādī to rule as governor. During his time, an inscription on a mosque he built was made in 1374 CE, which points to the year of his rule and the name of his governor, who was al-Ṣāḥib al-Khawāja Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Manṣūr ibn Maḥmūd Kurd Zaid. He also built a mosque in al-Qaṭīf.
1374 CE	Shanbā ibn Kīqbād. He arrived with his army in Uwāl and killed his nephew Fūlān and his supporters. He is said to have spread terror in Uwāl by raiding villages and killing many people. The people of Uwāl rebelled against him and killed him. The rebellion's leaders were: Mīr ʿAjab, Aḥmad ibn Rāshid and Muḥammad al-Bahlūn/al-Bahlawān. They led the island briefly until Tūrān Shāh came to Uwāl to settle the political turmoil.
1374? CE	Tūrān Shāh ibn Tahmatan restored his rule in Uwāl and killed Mīr ʿAjab. He also visited al-Qaṭīf and was received warmly by Mājid who may have been the emir of the ʿUqaylids.
1377-1388 CE	Bahman Shāh ibn Tūrān Shāh.
1388-1400 CE	Muḥammad Shāh ibn Bahman Shāh. He became vassal to Timūr/Tamerlane in 1392 CE.

Figure 16: Chronology of the Kings of Hormuz who ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf (*c*.1335-*c*.1400 CE)

2.3 Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf under the Kingdom of Hormuz (*c*.1335–*c*.1400 CE).

The Hormuzian rule over Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf was longer than that of the Salghūrids, the Mongols and the Ṭībids. The Hormuzian rule began in *c*.1335 when they took it from the Ṭībids. They ruled for much of the time until 1602 CE. However, this section focuses on the kingdom's rule in Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf until *c*.1400 CE, which is the scope of this thesis. Although it had a thriving economy, the kingdom of Hormuz, was characterised by deep internal conflicts within the ruling family. The island of Uwāl seems to have been a refuge or an exile for dissident pretenders to the throne. Al-Qaṭīf's governorship seems to have been given to local leaders.

The city of Hormuz was located on the mainland of Kirmān, overlooking the strait between the Gulf of Oman and the Gulf. It was the main seaport that served Kirmān, Sīstān and

Khurāsān. In 1247 CE, a new dynasty was established in Hormuz by Rukn al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad al-Kūsī al-Qalhātī, who was from the city of Qalhāt south of Muscat in Oman. Although Maḥmūd's kingdom enjoyed a great deal of autonomy, he was subject to the Sultan of Kirmān Rukn al-Dīn Balaq Ḥājib officially and was bound to pay him the *kharāj*. However, occasionally, al-Qalhātī acted rebelliously, refusing to pay the annual tax or blocking the strait by attacking the ships that came from India to Kirmān. He did so in order to deter the Sultan of Kirmān from imposing raised or additional taxes. In any case, maritime trade was Hormuz's most important activity. Maḥmūd al-Qalhātī clashed with the Mongols, but was defeated.[389] He died in 1277/8 CE. His son, Nuṣrat al-Dīn, was the first successor. Despite many internal conflicts with his brothers regarding his succession, Nuṣrat al-Dīn ruled until 1291 CE. Wars between pretenders to the throne coloured most of this period until the arrival of the Portuguese in 1507 CE.

In 1300 CE, King Ayāz and his people abandoned Hormuz and moved to an island called Jārūn or Jīrūn, which was located at strait between the Persian and Omani Gulfs. There they built a new town and harbour. They renamed it to Hormuz (the old was the abandoned Hormuz on the mainland).[390] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (1304–1369 CE) records that after the death of the [Ilkhānid] Sultan Abū Saʿīd [in 1335 CE], King Quṭb al-Dīn Tahmatan (r.1320-1346) or Bahman ibn Kirdānshāh, according to Naṭnazī, conquered Hormuz, Kīsh, Qalhāt, al-Qaṭīf and Baḥrayn [Uwāl].[391] Precisely when these events occurred is not known. Other seaports under his authority were al-Qaryāt, Shabā, Kalbā, Khūrfakkān, and Ṣuhār on the coast of Oman.[392]

Tahmatan II gave the joint rule of Uwāl to his nephews, Shādī and Shanbā, the sons of Kīqbād. However, the conflicting interests of these princes resulted in the move of Shanbā from Uwāl to the town of Fāl near Shīrāz. After the death of Tahmatan II, his son, Tūrān Shāh ibn Tahmatan (r.1346-1377 CE) defeated Shādī in Uwāl, but he left Shādī's son Fūlān ibn Shādī to rule it for him. Subsequently, Shanbā ibn Kīqbād arrived in Uwāl with his army and killed his

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[389] Colonel Henry Yule, ed., *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, The Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East* (London: John Murray, 1857), vol.2, 448; Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya*, 120; L. Lockhart, 'Hurmuz', *EI*[2].

[390] Pedro Teixiera, *The travels of Pedro Teixiera: With his 'Kings of Hormuz' and Extracts from his 'Kings of Persia'*, trans. William Sinclair, ed. Donald Ferguson (London: Hakluyt Society, before 1923), 160-162; Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya*, 120-126.

[391] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharā'ib al-Amṣār wa-ʿAjā'ib al-Asfār* (n.p.: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Khayriyya, 1322/1904), vol.1, 172; Maʿīn al-Dīn Naṭnazī, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh Maʿīnī*, 16-17; Pedro Teixiera, *The Travels of Pedro Teixiera*, 173-174, 181.

[392] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār*, vol.1, 204.

nephew Fūlān and the latter's supporters. Shanbā is said to have spread terror in Uwāl by raiding villages and killing many people. The people of Uwāl rebelled against him, taking over his castle and killing him. The rebellion's leaders were Mīr ʿAjab, Aḥmad ibn Rāshid and Muḥammad al-Bahlūn/al-Bahlawān. They governed the island briefly until King Tūrān Shāh came to Uwāl to settle the political disorder. He then killed the leader Mīr ʿAjab, who had asked him to rule the island for him. Tūrān Shāh also visited al-Qaṭīf, perhaps to consolidate his rule and to keep it within his kingdom. There, he was received warmly by Mājid ibn Izafāf, who was perhaps an ʿUqaylid leader. The exact dates of these events are not recorded in our sources. However, Tūrān Shāh died in 1377 CE.[393]

Two archaeological inscriptions related to the Hormuzian rule in Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf are extant. The first is on the island of Uwāl and was studied by Kalus, who wrote a report and analysed some of its contents. It is a text of a construction, a refurbishment or an expansion of al-Khamīs Mosque that included an inalienable religious endowment. The date of the inscription is 776/1374 (see figure 17). According to Kalus, the inscription was found in the village of al-Musallam or al-Musalla, to the west of Masjid al-Khamīs, but might have been in this mosque originally. The inscription was given the name '*waqfiyya*' and is now in the Bahrain National Museum. It reads as follows:[394]

(1) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم أمر بعمارة هذا المسجد المبارك الصاحب المعظم خواجه جمال الدين علي بن المرحوم منصور بن محمود كرد زيد تعظيمه قربة إلى

(2) الله تعالى ووقف على مصالحه جميع السرمر والملك المعروف بفوليان من البلد القديم مع نصف الملك المعروف بحمكان من حويص عالي على أن يلوث (؟) ويبق ستمائة منا ثنا لمأن كل من يحضر لقراءة

(3) القرآن كل يوم ... رمضان ومائة وخمسون منا ثنا لمأن كل من يحضر للصلاة يوم الجمعة كل جمعة خمسة آن وستمائة منا ثنا لقيمه ومائة منا ثنا لقيمة ثمن سراجه بهما وباقي

(4) لمصالحه من فروش و رم وغيرهما تقبل الله حسابه وأعلى درجاته في سابع عشرين صفر سنة ست وسبعين وسبعمائة هجرية

(1) In the name of God the compassionate the merciful. The construction/refurbishment/expansion of this blessed mosque is ordered by al-ṣāḥib, the

[393] Pedro Teixiera, *The Travels of Pedro Teixiera*, 183-188.
[394] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 28-30.

great, Khawāja Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī the son of the deceased Manṣūr the son of Maḥmūd Kurd Zayd as a gift for

(2) Almighty God. All the palms, sarmar, are inalienable religious endowment [*waqf*] for the maintenance of the mosque, also the property known as Fūlyān in al-Bilād al-Qadīm as well as half of the property known as Ḥamkān in [the village of] Ḥuwaiṣ ʿAlī to whoever takes refuge? [in the mosque]. Six hundred *mann* of dates is paid to whoever comes and reads

(3) the Qurʾān everyday … Ramaḍān, and one hundred and fifty *mann* of dates to whoever comes to perform the Friday prayer. Five *Ān* and six hundred *mann* of dates each Friday for [the mosque's] maintenance [or the keeper] and lighting and the rest

(4) for its auxiliaries such as carpets/mats, repairs and other things. May God accepts it and elevates his grades [in Heavens]. [Inscribed] on the twenty seventh of Ṣafar of the year seven hundred and seventy six of the *hijra* [1374 CE]

Figure 17: The *waqfiyya* inscription. Located in the Bahrain National Museum.

This text reveals important information regarding Baḥrayn's ruler and his title, currency and exchange material, religious affairs, and even dialect. The title 'al-ṣāḥib' literally means the holder or the master, and in administrative terms, it denotes a vizier or governor who represents an overlord. If it is accompanied by the word *dīwān,* it might mean the minister of finance. It was used frequently in the Persian polities including during the Ilkhānid era. Among the important figures who held this title were the Būyid vizier al-ṣāḥib Ibn ʿAbbād (d.995 CE), the Ilkhānid governor al-ṣāḥib ʿAṭā Malik Juwaynī in Baghdād (d.1276 CE) and his brother *ṣāḥib al-dīwān* Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī (d.1285 CE). The title of Khawāja/Khāja is also an honorific for those who acquired religious knowledge, especially in Sufism. It is also used in the Persian-speaking areas. We suggest that the great ṣāḥib Khawāja Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Manṣūr ibn Maḥmūd Kurd Zayd could have been the Hormuzian governor of Uwāl during the reign of king Tūrān Shāh ibn Tahmatan (1346-1377 CE).

The word *sarmar* meant a type of palm, which according to Belgrave, was 'a line of trees along a water channel.'[395] The word *Fūlyān* was perhaps the name of a district inside the capital, al-Bilād al-Qadīm. In addition, Ḥuwaiṣ ʿAlī was perhaps the name of an area in which the garden or property called Ḥamkān was located. Although this reading seems appropriate, I was confused about the words *wa-al–mulk al–maʿrūf bi–Fūlyān* because according to written sources, during that same year, Tūrān Shāh ibn Tahmatan, who had appointed his nephew Fūlān ibn Shādī as a governor in Uwāl, was killed by his other uncle Shanbā ibn Kīqbād. If we read the words independently, out of context, they might mean the king who was known as Fūlyān. However, when we read the words in context, they mean the property known as Fūlyān, which seems appropriate.

The verb *yalūth*, if it is read correctly, has many meanings in standard Arabic. However, here it seems to have been used colloquially with one meaning, which is not easy to interpret. In Arabic, it has several meanings: contortion, weakness, saving, keeping or preventing; wrapping something on another thing, such as winding a turban on the head, and the twisting of the trees. Among these meanings, the most suitable in this context might be saving or keeping, which are synonyms of the subsequent word, *yabqā*. The general meaning of the sentence could be that all palms and all properties should be kept and used for the following deeds. Alternatively, if the

[395] James Belgrave, *Welcome to Bahrain*, 86.

correct reading of *yalūth* was *yalūdh*, which means to take refuge, it might fit better. In their dialect, the Uwālī people might have replaced the letter *dh* with *th* at that time. Hence, it would mean that the dates/money from the palms and properties would be used for many purposes, including the support of refugees, homeless and passengers who would use the mosque.

The word *mann* or *mana* was a unit of mass used in India, Persia and Arabia. This traditional unit of mass found its way into the English dictionary as 'maund'.[396] The exact weight of the *mann* in Baḥrayn during that period is difficult to surmise, because this unit varied from place to place and from time to time. The word *thnā* is unknown to me. Kalus translated it as 'dates'. Perhaps the local Bahraini archaeologists who worked with him translated it this way because they were familiar with this local type of dates, but they did not translate the word *mann*.[397] If the translations of the two words are correct, the entire sentence means that whoever comes daily to the mosque to read the Qurʾān during Ramaḍān should be given 600 maunds of dates, and whoever attends the Friday Prayer should be given 150 maunds of dates.

If this interpretation is correct, it seems that the mosque was abandoned by many people, and the governor was trying to attract them to the Friday Prayer to listen to the *khuṭba* by offering the dates. We can only speculate on the real secular purpose of this religious endowment, especially when we bear in mind that it was made by the governor. The kingdom of Hormuz, as discussed above, was suffering internal political divisions and struggles between ruling family members regarding the throne. Moreover, the official doctrine of the kingdom was Sunni, as reported Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who also described the people of the neighboring town, al-Qaṭīf, as extreme Shīʿites *rāfiḍiyya ghulāt*.[398] Did the people abandon the mosque because it was dominated by Sunni imams? Was the abandonment a sign or expression of the people's political opposition to the Hormuzian rulers? Was the Sunni polity using the mosque and the *khuṭba* to bring people closer to the kingdom's doctrine and thus make them politically loyal to the king? It is difficult to answer these questions because of the absence of information in written sources.

[396] Henry Bradley, ed., 'maund', in *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, vol.6, part.2, 250; Sulṭān al-Qāsimī, 'al-Mann Wiḥdat Qiyās al-Wazn', Website of His Highness sheikh Sulṭān al-Qāsimī.
[397] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 29.
[398] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharāʾib al-Amṣār wa-ʿAjāʾib al-Asfār*, vol.1, 210.

Kalus translated the word *ān* or *ānn* as times.[399] Hence, the sentence would read '150 maunds of dates to whoever prays the Friday prayer five times.' However, I think the word denotes a currency, not times. The word *ānn* is perhaps the name of a small unit of currency, the *ānā*. This designation was used in the former Indian monetary system; the *ānā* was equal to 1/16 rupee. This unit is said to have originated in Islamic Turkmen polities. Perhaps this early inscription informs us of the usage of this currency.

The second piece of archaeological evidence is an inscription indicating the construction of a mosque, which was found in the cemetery of al-Ḥabāka in al-Qaṭīf. The names of King Tahtmatan II and his governor are inscribed. According to Maḥmūd al-Hājrī, the inscription reads:

(1) أمر بعمارة هذه المسجد المبارك المولى الأعظم العالم
(2) سلطان البر والبحر قطب الدنيا والدين تهمتن بن كردانشاه خلد ملكه
(3) ... العظم د...مور المكرم كمال الدولة والدين عبد الرحيم بن إسماعيل دام معظماً

(1) This blessed mosque was constructed on the order of the great *mawlā* and scholar;
(2) the sultan of land and sea, the axis of the world and religion, Tahmatan ibn Kirdān Shāh, may God extends his reign.
(3) … [al-ʿiẓam? d….mur?] the graced, the perfector of the state and religion ʿAbdulraḥīm ibn Ismāʿīl, may God exalt him.

As Maḥmūd al-Hājrī suggests, it seems that al-Mukarram Kamāl al-Dawla wa-al-Dīn ʿAbdulraḥīm ibn Ismāʿīl was the governor of al-Qaṭīf, who supervised the construction of the mosque. The limestone's measures are is 33 cm x 34 cm x 22 cm. The text is written in the Arabic *naskh* script and undated. Al-Hājrī also noticed a grammatical error in the demonstrative word *hādhihi*, which is supposed to be *hādha* because the reference is the masculine *al-masjid*. He speculates that the individual who inscribed it may not have been Arab.[400]

[399] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 28-30.
[400] Maḥmūd al-Hājrī, 'Shāhid Asās Bināʾ Masjid bi-l-Qaṭīf: al-Qaṭīf fiʾl-Qarn al-Thāmin al-Hijrī' *Majallat al-Wāḥa* 18 (2011). Accessed online on 20/1/2015: http://www.alwahamag.com/?act=artc&id=844

In summary, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf were under successive Iranian-based dynasties and administrations and beyond the ʿUqaylids' hands for most of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf served as stations in the maritime trade network in the Gulf. The internal affairs of these towns are vague, and we have only sketches of the events. However, the economy seems to have improved because Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf became better connected to the Gulf trade. The Ṭībids established a successful horse business, and chose al-Qaṭīf as a place to breed the horses. Moreover, we know that Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf witnessed religious reforms from the building of a mosque in al-Qaṭīf, a second minaret in the al-Khamīs Mosque in Uwāl, as well as the establishment of religious endowments. Nevertheless, the extent of the change should not be exaggerated: Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf still seem to have been remained relatively peripheral areas. Three main observations lead to this conclusion. First, they are rarely mentioned in the written sources. Second, when Uwāl is mentioned, it is portrayed as a refuge for defeated pretenders. Third, where such records exist, Uwāl is indicated as lacking central authority. Local leaders sometimes ruled the island temporarily until the king arrived and settled the political disorder. In fact, geographically, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf were located at the very margin of the territories belonging to the kingdom of Hormuz.

3. The ʿUqaylid Emirate: A Brief Historical Background and Genealogy of the Tribe.

The genealogy and origins of the tribe of Banū ʿUqayl have been already discussed in Chapter Three. Beyond that, the available information on the ʿUqaylids is concerned with their leaders only. It seems that the tribe had more than one chief at the same time in different areas. It is difficult to tell the exact hierarchy of the different ʿUqaylid branches. However, these leaders were, apparently, descended from Sinān ibn Ghufayla ibn Shabāna ibn Qadīma ibn Nabāta ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿAwf ibn Mālik ibn Rabīʿa ibn ʿAwf ibn ʿĀmir ibn ʿUqayl. They were called Banū ʿUqayl and sometimes al-Qadīmāt and al-ʿAmāyir.[401]

The mother tribe was ʿUqayl b. Kaʿb b. Rabīʿa b. ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa of the Hawāzin branch of the Qays ʿAylān, which had an enormous number of sub-clans and were spread across almost the entire Muslim areas of the medieval age, including Iraq, Syria, Arabia, Upper and Lower

[401] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1290.

Egypt, North Africa and al-Andalus. They even reached the Caucasus, where they embraced Christianity. The mother tribe encompassed, for example, the sub-clans of al-Muntafiq in southern Iraq, Khafāja in western Iraq, ʿUqayl and ʿIbāda in northern Iraq, Banū Kilāb in Syria and Banū Hilāl in northern Africa. The broader tribal offshoots succeeded in establishing polities in al-Kūfa, Mosul and al-Jazīra al-Furātiyya in the tenth and eleventh centuries and, most importantly for this study, the ʿUqaylid emirate in Baḥrayn during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[402] Many important leaders and poets belonged to the tribe, such as al-Muqallad, Quraysh and his son Muslim, in addition to the famous leader Abū Zayd al-Hilālī in North Africa, the seventh-century poets Laylā al-Akhyaliyya of ʿIbāda and Qays ibn al-Mulawwaḥ, known as *majnūn Laylā*.[403]

3.1 ʿUṣfūrids or ʿUqaylids: A dynasty of Several Tribal Branches.

The polity that ruled inner Baḥrayn from the 1230s CE to 1350s CE has been given by recent historians the name of the ‘ʿUṣfūrid emirate’. Perhaps the earliest historians to use this name were Smith, and Rentz and Mulligan in their entries of ‘al-Baḥrayn’ and ‘ʿUṣfūrids’ in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition* (1954-2005 CE). This was followed by ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, *Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn* (1979).[404] Ever since, every historian and writer who has written either briefly or extensively on the emirate used the name ‘ʿUṣfūrids’.

This research suggests using the name ‘ʿUqaylid emirate’ instead of ‘ʿUṣfūrid emirate’ because the latter is problematic and misleading. It implies that all of the emirs were descended from ʿUṣfūr, which is probably untrue. There is no doubt that the branch of ʿUṣfūr took the leadership of the tribe in the founding period in the mid-thirteenth century. Nevertheless, we

[402] Even the Jabrid Emirate (*c*.1450-1521 CE) and their successors the Khawālid Emirate belonged to ʿUqayl.
[403] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Qalāʾid al-Jummān fiʾl-Taʿrīf bi-Qabāʾil ʿArab al-Zamān*, 115-132, at.120; H. Kindermann, ‘ʿUḳayl’, *EI²*; Khālid al-Nazar, *Āl ʿUṣfūr: Usra Ḥakamat al-Khalīj Miʾa wa-Khamsīn ʿĀm* (Beirut: al-Muʾasasa al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Dirāsāt waʾl-Nashr, 2005).
[404] Rentz and Mulligan, ‘al-Baḥrayn’, *EI²*; G.R. Smith, ‘ʿUṣfūrids’, *EI²*; ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, ‘Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn wa-Dawruha al-Siyāsī fī Tārīkh Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya’ *al-Watheekah* 3, 2 (1982): 26-77.

cannot be sure that the leadership, as al-Ḥumaydān states, rested solely in the descendants of ʿUṣfūr for about a hundred and fifty years.[405]

A careful reading of the sources shows that the leadership of the tribe in Baḥrayn used to shift to other branches of the tribe successively. We read five different branch chiefs leading the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn in different times; the first one of course was ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān and his sons; the second was Māniʿ ibn ʿAlī ibn Mājid ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān; the third was Abū ʿĀṣim ibn Sirḥān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān;[406] and the fourth was; Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Mufaddā ibn Sinān;[407] the fifth was, Ṣadaqa ibn Ibrāhīm Abī Dalf,[408] whose full name is unknown. It is obvious that these leaders represented more than a branch and that they met genealogically in their common near ancestor Sinān. The suggestion of al-Ḥumaydān and al-Janbī, which considered the chief Māniʿ, who visited the Mamlūks as we will see below, as the son of ʿUṣfūr has no evidence in the primary sources.[409] Rather, Māniʿ seems to have been the son of ʿAlī.[410] Therefore, since all these chiefs belonged to Banū ʿUqayl and they were named by early historians as Banū ʿUqayl,[411] it would be more accurate to name them the ʿUqaylids.

3.2 The Transition of Power to the ʿUqaylids (*c.* 1229 CE): Their Political Structure and Leadership.

We have already discussed the collapse of the ʿUyūnids and the transfer of power to the ʿUqaylids in Chapter Four. Yet, in order to begin the analytical narrative of the ʿUqaylids as emirs of inner Baḥrayn and central Arabia, we should at least remind of how they succeeded the ʿUyūnids and add some relative details. In short, the late period of the Uyūnid emirate was characterised by the deterioration of the Uyūnid emirs' power, both politically and economically.

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[405] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 26, 61-62. When the first and second names of an ʿUqaylid are given in Mamlūk or Persian soures, he links them with the name of ʿUsfūr without relying on evidence, but on an assumption.

[406] Those three names are found in ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 105-106.

[407] al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106-7.

[408] Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh, *Kitāb Tathqīf al-Taʿrīf bi-l-Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, ed. Rudolf Vesely (al-Qāhira: Institut Francais D'Archeologie Orientale du Caire, 1987), 82-83.

[409] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn,' 50; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 555.

[410] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 105-106.

[411] Abū al-Fidā, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* (al-Qāhira: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Ḥusainiyya al-Miṣriyya), vol.4, 81.

This coincided with the increase of the ʿUqaylid sheikhs' political and economic influence, especially Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān, who was the father of ʿUṣfūr. By the 1230s CE, the Uyūnid emirs were ousted, and the towns of al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf came under the control of the ʿUqaylids. The transition of power to the ʿUqaylids was likely to have been facilitated by the society's elite, the advisors who are likely to have been merchants and landlords. Al-Ḥumaydān argues that the elite were seemingly driven by their distrust in the weak ʿUyūnid emirs who had failed to protect them, and their fear of the ʿUqaylids' raids on their properties. They made a deal with the ʿUqaylids that guaranteed the succession of the ʿUqaylids as well as the safety of their businesses.[412]

The administrative formation and political structure of the ʿUqaylid polity is unclear. We do not know whether the new polity continued to use the ʿUyūnid institutions of the *dawāwīn*, including the chancery, the court, the professional army, the market police and the judiciaries as discussed above. It seems that the polity did not reach the same level of monarchy and civil governance that the ʿUyūnids had developed and practiced. Although, the ʿUqaylid leaders enjoyed civil prosperity, such as owning castles and having *ḥāshiya* (a group of private guards, servants, and associates), they perhaps acted as traditional tribal sheikhs. This idea will be evident when we shed light on their traditional nomadic practices– such as looting the caravans of their patrons' enemies and, later, frequently visiting Mamlūk courts as clients and sometimes caravan leaders– and from the way they were represented in the Persian and Mamlūk sources as Bedouins.

The most we can know about the power distribution in the early phase of the ʿUqaylid polity is that the city of al-Aḥsāʾ, the former ʿUyūnid capital, remained under ʿUṣfūr's direct control and then under his sons after him for a number of years.[413] Al-Qaṭīf was ruled by his cousin Abū ʿĀṣim ibn Sirḥān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿĀmr [ʿUmayra] ibn Sinān. This sheikh, as Vaṣṣāf writes, was killed during the Salghūrid invasion of al-Qaṭīf in 1244 CE. Another cousin, called Māniʿ ibn ʿAlī ibn Mājid ibn ʿUmayra, was ruling an oasis or village around al-Qaṭīf.[414] The hierarchical relationship between these sheikhs is unknown. We can only guess, based on

[412] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 313-350, vol.2, 699-711, 1138-1140, 1193-1243; Muḥammad Āl ʿAbdulqādir, *Tuḥfat al-Mustafīd*, vol.1, 112, 114-118; ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 39.
[413] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106.
[414] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 105-106.

the recurrent mention of his name in the sources, that ʿUṣfūr was the most powerful emir of the whole tribe. Perhaps Abū ʿĀṣim ibn Sirḥān and Māniʿ ibn ʿAlī were emirs of their own branches and perhaps represented ʿUṣfūr in al-Qaṭīf and other oases, such as Malḥ, Matāliʿ, al-Anṭaʿ, al-Qarʿā, al-Lahhāba and al-Jawda.[415] Perhaps other emirs of different branches remained in the desert and were operating in an area designated for them by ʿUṣfūr. This hypothesis might only be applied in the early phase of the emirate; there is more information on this phase than the later phases.

In order to get a better conception of the ʿUqaylid polity in Baḥrayn, a suitable approach is to look at parallel examples of nomadic polities modelled on the same pattern of living that existed in a relatively close period. It might be suggested that the ʿUqaylid polity's formation and political structure might have been similar, or close to those of the nomadic polities in northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia (al-Jazīra al-Furātiyya), such as the ʿUqaylid polity in Mosul and al-Jazīra (990–1096 CE), the Mirdāsid polity in Aleppo (1024–1080 CE) and the Numayrid polity in Ḥarrān (990-*c.*1081 CE).[416] Stefan Heidemann studied these polities and concluded that the best theory that describes the model of their political entity is that of the 'dimorphic state' developed by Michael Rowton. The hypothesis suggests that the nomadic ruler in that kind of polity tries to present himself as urban in the city, while having his military power in the desert. Although Rowton did not include the tribes of Arabia in this category, as his focus was on the Fertile Crescent's tribes, It seems that that the conditions and descriptions he makes for the 'dimorphic state' could be equally applied to the ʿUqaylids in Baḥrayn. Rowton states that '[T]he hallmark of dimorphic structure is an autonomous chiefdom centered on a town in tribal territory', and that 'from this base a local dynasty exerts a varying blend of rule and influence over the nomadic and sedentary tribes in the countryside. The population of the chiefdom includes both a non-tribal and a tribal element.'[417]

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[415] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106-107.

[416] See Stefan Heidemann, *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien: Städtische Entwicklung und Wirtschaftliche Bedingungen in ar-Raqqa und Ḥarrān von der Zeit der Beduinischen Vorherrschaft bis zu den Seldchukuken* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Hugh Kennedy, 'The ʿUqailids of Mosul: The Origins and Structure of a Nomad Dynasty', in *Union Europeenne d'Arabisants et d'Islamisants* (ed.), *Actas del XII Congreso de la U.E.A.I.* Madrid (1986): 391-402; reprinted in Hugh Kennedy, *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing limited, 2006), 391-402.

[417] M. B. Rowton, 'Urban Autonomy in a Nomadic Environment' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 32 1/2 (1973): 202; Stefan Heidemann, 'Arab Nomads and the Seljuq Military' in *Shifts and Drifts in Nomad-Sedentary Relations*, ed. Stefan Leder and Bernhard Streck (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2005), 290.

Bosworth also observes some urban style governance exercised by the nomadic leaders of the ʿUqaylids of Mosul. He explains that 'there are indications that the ʿUḳaylids [of Mosul] were something more than predatory Bedouin chiefs and that they introduced certain administrative techniques into their lands. Thus, Muslim b. Quraysh is said to have installed an intelligence agent *ṣāḥib al-khabar* in each one of his villages.'[418]

Hugh Kennedy's view on the ʿUqaylid polity of Mosul, in particular, differs from that of Bosworth and Heidemann. He describes the polity as a 'nomad state'. He suggests that even though the ʿUqaylid emirs of Mosul controlled the urban cities, such as Mosul, Niṣībīn and Anbār and took castles, they did not live in these cities, but rather remained in their pastoral camp in al-Ḥilla. From there, they occasionally visited the cities in order to see the agents who collected taxes and revenues for them.[419]

In fact, due to the shortage of sources on the Baḥraynī ʿUqaylids' internal affairs, it is not easy to determine precisely which model of these i.e. 'nomadic state' or 'dimorphic state' could be the model followed by the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn. However, they likely would have followed the 'dimorphic state' model, because the early ʿUqaylid leaders were intensively involved with the ʿUyūnid emirate and its economy and society, which might suggest that they had lived a considerable time in the towns. Mamlūk sources which wrote about the ʿUqaylid leaders reveal that they took castles, had a *ḥāshiya* and owned farms.[420] We can deduce from the ʿUyūnid source *Sharḥ dīwān* that the ʿUqaylid leader may have maintained a certain degree of sedentary life style and dealt with different sedentary classes in the towns, such as merchants, peasants, pearling masters and so on. We have already discussed earlier that many agricultural properties had been transferred by means of law to the ownership of these ʿUqaylid leaders. They had also partnerships with maritime merchants in the seaports of Baḥrayn, such as al-Qaṭīf and Uwāl, and they owned ships and slave pearl divers, as reported in the *Sharḥ dīwān*. The early ʿUqaylids seemingly preferred to do the sedentary business themselves instead of only taxing the landlords,

[418] C.E. Bosworth, 'Ukaylids', *EI*^{2}.
[419] Hugh Kennedy, 'The ʿUqailids of Mosul', 397-398, 401. Kennedy adds that this polity was in contrast to Ibn Khaldūn's paradigm of Arab state's evolution and transformation from nomad to sedentary, when it retained its nomadic life style until its collapse and did not recruit professional soldiers.
[420] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106; Anonymoys, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, 1227; Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh, *Kitāb Tathqīf al-Taʿrīf*, 114.

commercial ships and pearling masters which necessitated the leaders' settlement.[421] Also, the Salghūrid invasion of al-Qaṭīf resulted in the murder of someone Vaṣṣāf describes as 'the leader of the Arabs'. This might point to the leader's residency in the town which made him famous enough for the Iranian historian. Furthermore, the ʿUqaylid leader Mājid is reported to have received and welcomed king Tūrān Shāh in his visit to al-Qaṭīf during the Hormuzian period.[422] These reports perhaps tell us that the ʿUqaylid leaders were more than completely nomadic leaders. Hence, the ʿUqaylid polity in Baḥrayn likely qualified for the 'dimorphic state' model.

The majority of the tribe, who accounted for the ʿUqaylid military power, lived in the desert, breeding their camel and sheep herds, protecting caravans, and raiding other towns or tribes for given reasons. They also must have had contacts with sedentary people. A hypothesis on nomad-sedentary relations in the Near East suggests that nomads and sedentary formed a complementary and interdependence relationship. Nomads could not afford complete subsistence; hence, they were dependent on people of towns who could offer them vital manufactured products, such as clothing, weapons, metal utensils and so on. In exchange, nomads supplied the sedentary with meat, dairy products and animals' wool, hair, hide and dung.[423] In this light, we can perceive the relationship between the majority of nomads of the desert of Baḥrayn and the sedentary people in the towns. These ʿUqaylids, both leaders and nomads of the deserts, would later be involved in the politics, military and trade of the great powers outside their bases in Baḥrayn and central Arabia, as we will see below.

Leadership in an Arab Bedouin society is mainly based on two merits; wealth and charismatic personality. In establishing and consolidating leadership, the wealth of a leader is used for several purposes, such as to show his generosity; to fund the tribe's raids by purchasing horses, camels and weapons; to provide gifts and some land grants *iqṭāʿāt* to other branch leaders; to afford political marriages for himself or his sons; and to perform other services that interest and serve the whole tribe. As an example, during the ʿUyūnid period, the enormous number of *iqṭāʿāt* that were granted by the ʿUyūnid emirs to the father of ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid ibn ʿUmayra ibn Sinān transformed him into that kind of tribal leader around whom the entire tribe could rally. It might be plausible that ʿUṣfūr used his wealth to consolidate his political power

[421] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1228.
[422] Pedro Teixiera, *The Travels of Pedro Teixiera*, 183-188.
[423] Robert Hoyland, *Arabs and Arabia: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* (London: Routledge, 2001), 98.

and leadership among the rest of the ʿUqaylid leaders and branches by distributing properties among them.

As social anthropologists William and Felicity Lancaster explain, a nomadic leader needed to have several characteristics. He needed to have a decent reputation based on tribal moral values and remarkable negotiation skills, especially with the outsiders. He also needs to be able to achieve deals and contracts on behalf of the tribe and, for their own good. He needed an ability to initiate political and economic enterprises, to mediate, to arbitrate, to settle disputes wisely between the members of the tribe and offer expert advice and consultancy.[424] Kennedy adds that securing grazing lands for pastoral people is a top priority of a tribal leader.[425] Hence, the leader's ability to conquer and distribute these lands makes him a suitable leader.

Political succession in the ʿUqaylid emirate is also vague. As we discussed above, the sons of ʿUṣfūr might have not retained their supreme leadership over the entire tribe for the whole period of its reign. In principle, nomads do not necessarily follow a hereditary system of father-to-son for leadership; once the sheikh weakens or dies, another sheikh who has similar or better merits and character traits replaces the former leader. It is not mandatory that the successor of the leader would be his son or brother. This applies to either the leadership of a branch of the tribe or to the whole tribe. This tradition might explain the reason for reading different names of ʿUqaylid leaders who belonged to different branches of the tribe in different times during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The anthropologist Ernest Gellner explains the situation in Middle Eastern tribal state-like: 'at the demise of a given chief, the selection of the successor depends on the balance of power and prestige rather than on simple application of a rule', and the 'succession can go to son, brother, nephew, or paternal uncle.'[426]

[424] William Lancaster and Fidelity Lancaster, 'Concepts of Leadership in Bedouin society' in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, VI: Elites Old and New in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*: (Papers of the Sixth Workshop on Late Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam): 1/6 (2004): 34-43.
[425] Hugh Kennedy, 'The ʿUqailids of Mosul', 399; Hugh Kennedy, 'The City and the Nomad', in *The New Cambridge History of Islam Volume 4: Islamic Cultures and Societies to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Robert Irwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 287.
[426] Ernest Gellner, 'Tribalism and the State in the Middle East,' in *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, ed. Philip Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 111.

3.3 The ʿUqaylids in Baḥrayn before the Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War 1230s-1260 CE.

By the 1250s, the ʿUqaylids extended their political influence to central Arabia after they defeated the dominant tribe of Kilāb which had controlled al-Yamāma. The other minor tribes in that geographical area seem to have succumbed to the ʿUqaylids and perhaps allied or confederated with them. The earliest Arabic report on the ʿUqaylids after the collapse of the ʿUyūnids is given by the traveller Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī (d.1275), who wrote, 'I asked the people of Baḥrayn when I met them in 651 [A.H] [1253 CE] in al-Madīna al-Nabawiyya about Baḥrayn. They informed me that Baḥrayn was ruled by Banū ʿĀmir ibn ʿAwf ibn ʿUqayl, and that Banū ʿUṣfūr belonged to Banū ʿUqayl. They made al-Aḥsāʾ their capital. The tribe of Banū Taghlib was among their subjects.' Ibn Saʿīd also wrote: 'they [Banū ʿUqayl] took al-Yamāma from Banū Kilāb in about 650 [A.H.] [1252 CE], at which ʿUṣfūr and his descendents became the rulers.'[427] Likewise, Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī, in his book, *al-Jughrāfyā*, wrote that 'the area between al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Yamāma is dominated by the tribe of Banū ʿĀmir, and the current Saqʿīn? kings[428] belong to them.'[429] Perhaps the word *Saqʿīn* was miscopied by the copyists or the editor of the book, and it might be *al-mulūk al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn*,[430] because in his aforementioned reports in other books, he named the rulers ''Uṣfūr and his sons'.

The words *mulk* and *malik* have a loose meaning in Arabic. Unlike modern titles of rulers, these words and titles were not always well defined by medieval historians and chroniclers, who sometimes did not distinguish between king, emir, sultan, *ḥākim*, *wālī* and so on, except perhaps for the caliph. In their usage, *malik* encompasses many high degrees of leading political positions. We have already seen how Ibrāhīm al-Ṭībī was called *malik al-islām*, although he was an employee and a governor who worked for the Ilkhānids. Also, the source *Sharḥ dīwān* gives the ʿUyūnid emirs many different titles, such as *malik*, emir and sultan. It is better not to overestimate this word given by Ibn Saʿīd. It might simply mean the leaders. Indeed, these reports suggest that during mid-thirteenth century, the ʿUṣfūrids were the predominant leaders and the representatives of the entire ʿUqaylid tribe.

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[427] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106-107, 366; Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Qalāʾid al-Jummān*, 120.
[428] In Arabic script: ملوك الصقعين.
[429] Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī, *Kitāb al-Jughrāfyā*, ed. Ismāʿīl al-ʿArabī (Bairut: al-Maktab al-Tijārī li-ʾl-Ṭibāʿa wa-Nashr waʾl-Tawzīʿ, 1970), 118, 131.
[430] In Arabic script: ملوك العصفوريين.

The ʿUqaylid leaders during this period seem to have enjoyed economic prosperity due to their full control and ownership of vast agricultural estates as well as the annual tributes they received from the Salghūrids. Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī describes the lands of the ʿUqaylids as lands of crops and herds '*bilād zarʿ wa-ḍarʿ*'.[431] The Salghūrid occupation of al-Qaṭīf might have pushed back the ʿUqaylid maritime interests and activities. Yet, this does not mean that the ʿUqaylids have not positively been affected by the Gulf trade as they reached India as horse merchants.[432]

3.4 The ʿUqaylids' Role in the Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War (1260–1323 CE).

In a relatively close time to the emergence of the ʿUqaylids as the supreme tribal power in Baḥrayn and central Arabia, a new Sultanate emerged in Egypt in 1250 CE which overthrew the Ayyūbids. This new Sultanate was named the Baḥrī Mamlūks, also known as the Kipchakid Mamlūks and ruled until 1382 CE. They were succeeded by the Burjī Mamlūks who ruled until 1517 CE.[433]

Simultaneously, the Mongols conquered most of Asia and Eurasia, and during the leadership of Hulago Khān (r.1256–1265), they crowned their victories by conquering the capital of the Islamic Caliphate Baghdād and killed its last Caliph al-Mustaʿṣim-billāh in 1258 CE.[434] The Mongol troops moved westward and tried to conquer Syria and Egypt; there, they met with the Mamlūk army led by Sayf al-Dīn Quṭuz (r.1259–1260 CE). They fought a pivotal battle at ʿAyn Jālūt in 1260 CE, which resulted in a Mamlūk victory and thus halted the Mongols' advance towards the west. The war between them did not come to an end, and in fact took other shapes. Amitai-Preiss describes that war in modern parlance as a 'cold war' in which both great powers supported 'raids over both sides of the border, diplomatic manoeuvres, espionage and

[431] Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf fiʾl-Musṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusain Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1988), 114.
[432] Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, vol.3, 55.
[433] For general studies on the Mamlūks see Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamlūk Sultanate, 1250-1382* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986); P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusaders: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London: Longman, 1986); David Ayalon, *Studies on the Mamlūks of Egypt, 1250-1517* (London: Variorum, 1977).
[434] See David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).

other types of subterfuge, propaganda and ideological posturing, psychological warfare, use of satellite states and attempts to build large-scale alliances against the enemy.'[435]

[435] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamlūks: The Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War, 1260-1281* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

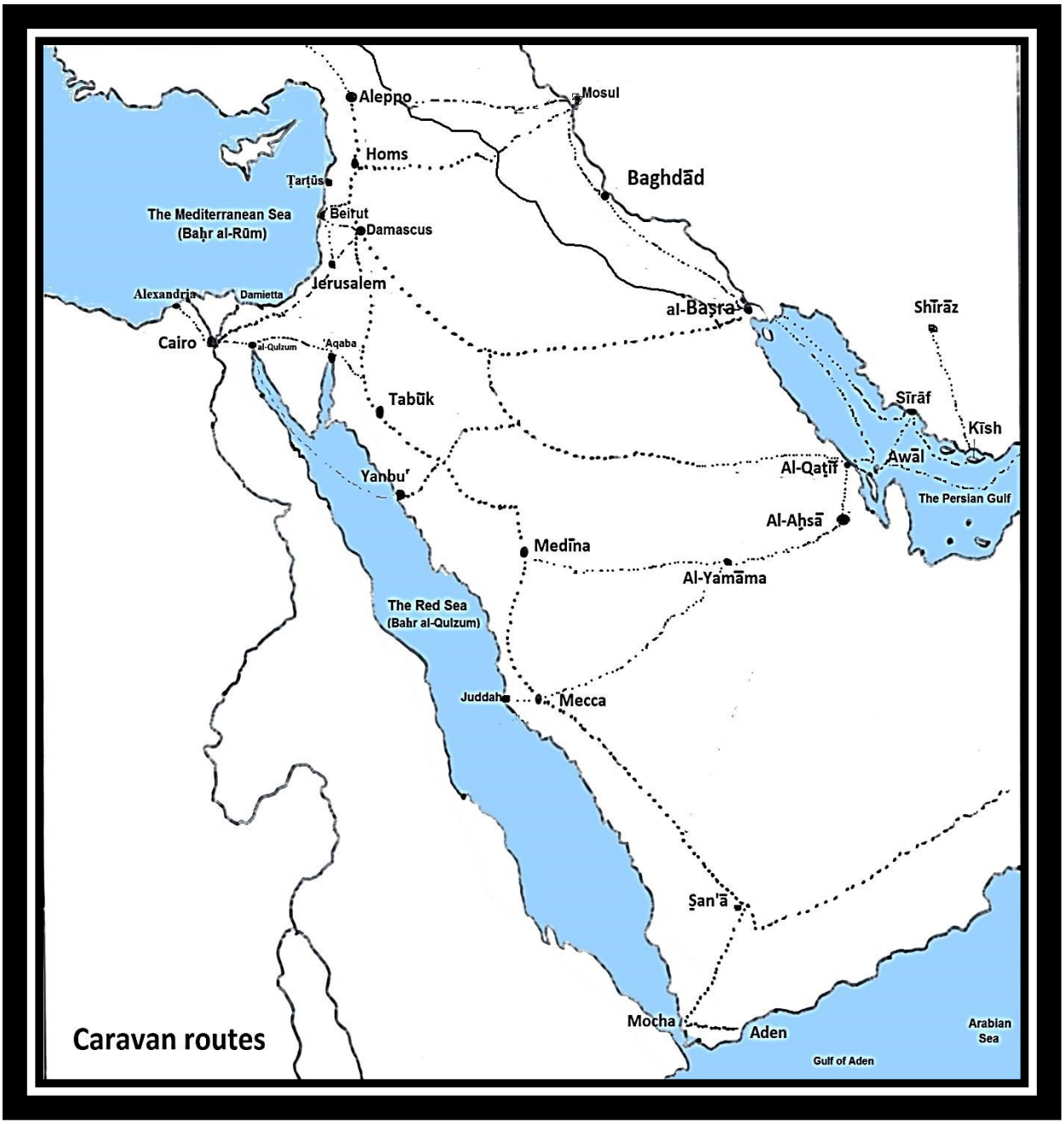

Figure 18: Map of caravan trade routes of Arabia.

The tribes of Syria, western and southern Iraq, Baḥrayn and Central Arabia were important agents in the 'cold war' between the Mamlūks and the Mongols for a number of reasons. The tribes controlled the trade, pilgrimage and communication routes. They also could

be effective agents in passing and delivering information for intelligence purposes. They could act as proxy warriors and could be instructed to cause problems for either side by raiding cities, resources and caravans. The tribes also could be recruited to attack other tribes that were allied with the enemy.[436] The tribes of Baḥrayn and Central Arabia were capable of attacking the Iraqi and Iranian pilgrimage caravans that crossed the routes leading to Makka and Medina, as the Qarāmiṭa famously used to do in the tenth century. This could be very effective in challenging the legitimacy of any ruler who was supposed to guarantee his Muslim people a safe travelling route to the two Holy Mosques to perform their religious duty. By that time, the Mongols had not yet converted to Islam, but their Muslim governors and vassals organised the caravan trips to and from Makka.

The conventional roles of the nomads in the Near East, especially in Syria and Mesopotamia, were to act as buffers between empires and sometimes as clients of empires. They served the interests of their patrons and overlords. The nomads used to decide on which side they would be according to their own benefit. Many times, the nomads shifted their alliance between empires or even worked pragmatically with both of them. A number of historical examples could be mentioned here. The Jafnid and Naṣrid polities in Syria and Mesopotamia were vassals of the Romans and the Sāsānids during late antiquity. A recent study on these nomads by Fisher shows that both the Jafnids and Naṣrids participated in military expeditions under the commands of the Romans and the Sāsānids. He explains that the Jafnids were attached by the Romans to the apparatus of the 'state' and their leaders were given the official title of phylarch. Fisher states that this political client relationship offered the Romans additional military power and access to the Jafnids and other tribes under their leadership.[437]

The same role was repeated and played in later eras. The Syrian and Jazīrian emirates of the Ḥamdānids (890–1004 CE), the ʿUqaylids in Mosul and al-Jazīra (990–1096 CE), the Mirdāsids in Aleppo (1024–1080 CE) and the Numayrids in Ḥarrān (990-1081 CE) were clients

[436] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamlūks*, 64-71.
[437] See Greg Fisher, *Between Empires: Arabs, Romans, and Sasanians in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 116-127, at.125, 194-195.

of and buffers between the ʿAbbāsids/Būyids/Seljūqs in Iraq and the Fāṭimids in Egypt. The two empires fought each other via these nomads.[438]

Also, during the early Ayyūbid period in the thirteenth century, the newly arrived immigrants to Syria from the Arabian Peninsula, led by Āl Faḍl, a branch of the tribe of Ṭayyiʾ, clashed with the aforementioned Arab principalities. These tribes, as Heidemann demonstrates, were later integrated into the Ayyūbid state by legitimising them within the hierarchy of the state and were granted lands '*iqṭāʿāt*'. King al-ʿĀdil Abū Bakr (d.1218 CE) formalised the title/position of *imārat al-ʿarab* (the Bedouin's emirate). Although the title had already existed in Syria during the Fāṭimids, it became an official title and position during the Ayyūbids rather than an independent title and position as before.[439]

Moreover, during the early time of the Mamlūks in the second half of the thirteenth century, the tribes of Syria also took the same role as buffers and clients. The tribes of Āl Faḍl, Āl al-Mira and a branch of Khafāja in western Iraq were attracted by the Sultan Baybars (r.1260–1277 CE), who kept the traditional Ayyūbid title *amīr al-ʿarab* and patronised them for the purpose of enhancing his political and military advantage in the war against the Mongols. Amitai-Preiss states that Baybars and the early Mamlūk Sultans had succeeded in integrating the majority of the Syrian nomads into the governing scheme and that it reached its peak in the third reign of the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (1309–1340 CE). He demonstrates that the nomadic chiefs were granted official titles, luxurious gifts and, most importantly, *iqṭāʿāt* (land grants).[440] Amitai-Preiss did not write about the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn and central Arabia and their role in that war. The following will contribute further to this theme.

After the triumph of the Mamlūks at the battle of ʿAyn Jālūt (1260 CE), Sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars (r.1260–1277 CE) received many delegations from many areas in the Near East, including leaders of tribes, who perhaps wanted to offer their congratulations.[441] We do not know if these tribal leaders came after an invitation or they came by their own initiative. In any case,

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[438] See Stefan Heidemann, *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien*, 289-295, 447-448.
[439] Stefan Heidemann, 'Arab Nomads and the Seljūq Military', 298-299; see also M. A. Hiyari, 'The Origins and Development of the Amīrate of the Arabs during the Seventh/Thirteenth and Eighth/Fourteenth Centuries,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38/3 (1975): 509-524.
[440] Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamlūks*, 64-71.
[441] ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, ed. Aḥmad Ḥaṭīṭ (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1983), vol.31, 329-338.

among these tribes were the Arabs of Baḥrayn. Al-Qalqashandī quoted Ibn Zammākh al-Ḥamdānī, who wrote, 'The tribe of ʿĀmir headed by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Qaʿadī [perhaps al-Mufaddā] ibn Sinān ibn ʿUḍla [Ghufayla] ibn Shabāna ibn Qadīma ibn Nabāta ibn ʿĀmir came as a delegation to the Sultanate of Egypt in the reign of al-Ẓāhir Baybars and they were treated generously and received great care and grace.'[442] We do not know the exact position of this ʿUqaylid leader and whether he was the leader of the whole tribe or a branch or a representative of a supreme ʿUqaylid emir. We could only know that this leader was a nephew of one of the most important ʿUyūnid emirs, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-ʿUyūnī (d. *c.*1220 CE).[443]

The purpose of such a visit, the subjects of their talk or negotiations, the agreements and pacts that might have been made are unknown. There might be two explanations for that visit. The first one is that Baybars had invited the ʿUqaylids in order to establish an alliance relationship, as he did with Āl Faḍl and Āl Mirā in Syria, as well as with the tribes of ʿIbāda and al-Muntafiq in southern and western Iraq. Baybars probably aimed to build large-scale alliances with the tribes that bordered Iraq from the west and south. The second suggestion views the visit as an ʿUqaylid initiative. The ʿUqaylids perhaps sought to establish a diplomatic relationship with the Mamlūks, probably to make themselves known and to present the tribe as a potential ally against the Mongols in Iraq, similarly to their fellow tribes in Syria and Iraq.

Tribal leaders/emirs in general are known to approach imperial states willingly and to offer their services, especially when the state possesses formidable power, generous and is unwilling to impose its power on the nomads' territories. In these cases, the nomadic leaders become motivated by the desire of gaining wealth, prestige and state recognition, hence consolidating and empowering their own position within their communities.[444]

[442] Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 106-7.
[443] See Chapter Four.
[444] See Richard Tapper, 'Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople on Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East', 64-70; Greg Fisher, *Between Empires: Arabs, Romans, and Sasanians in Late Antiquity*, 125.

3.5 The Fluctuation or Division of the ʿUqaylids between the Mamlūks and the Ilkhānids.

The ʿUqaylids appear in a number of brief reports provided by Mamlūk sources as allies of both powers; the Mamlūks and the Mongols. There are two potential explanations for this. They might have either fluctuated in their alliance between the two powers, which is not unusual in tribal politics, or that the ʿUqaylids may have been divided into two groups, one supporting the Mamlūks and the other supporting the Mongols.

It is unknown whether Baybars (r.1260-1277 CE) succeeded in enlisting the ʿUqaylids to his side or not; perhaps he did; however, after his death, during the Sultanate of Sayf al-Dīn Qalāwūn (r.1279–1290 CE), the ʿUqaylids, or perhaps a group of them, turned their alliance to the Mongols. We read in *Tashrīf al-ayyām* that in 1285 CE, the tribes of Āl Faḍl and Āl Mirā, who were clients of the Mamlūks, raided the lands of the Mongols in Iraq, then attacked the Arabs of Baḥrayn and killed their leader ʿAlī ibn Mājid and his family and took many captives and spoils.[445]

The ʿUqaylids were also involved in a joint Mongol army sent by Uligatu Khudābanda (r.1304–1316 CE) to support a *sharīf* of Makka, Ḥumayḍa ibn Abī Numā in 1316 CE, who deserted to the Mongols because he was replaced by his brother, Rumaytha, by the Mamlūks. Ḥumayḍa promised Khudābanda that when he is restored he would cut the *khuṭba* for the Mamlūks and make it for the Mongols. When the army, which consisted of the Arabs of Baḥrayn, and some Mongols led by al-Darfandī, passed al-Baṣra and entered Baḥrayn, the news of Khudābanda's death reached them. Accordingly, the army halted the advance, and many soldiers abandoned the army. After that, the pro-Mamlūk tribe Āl Faḍl arrived near al-Baṣra and defeated the remnant of the army.[446]

The Mamlūk restoration of the alliance with the ʿUqaylids occurred under Qalāwūn's son, Sultan al-Nāsir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn after 1316 CE (his first reign 1293–1294 CE, second reign 1299–1309 CE, and third reign 1309–1340 CE). The historian Abū al-Fidā, who entered the service of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, records, 'In 718 A.H. [1319 CE]

[445] Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ʿAbdulẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-Ayyām wa-l-ʿUṣūr fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, ed. Murād Kāmil and Muḥammad al-Najjār (al-Qāhira: al-Sharika al-ʿArabiyya li-ʾl-Ṭibāʿa waʾl-Nashr, 1961), 111.
[446] Abū al-Fidā, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol.4, 81.

Banū ʿUqayl, who were the Arabs of al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf allied [with the Mamlūk Sultan] against Muhanna ibn ʿĪsā [Āl Faḍl] and expelled his brother Faḍl from al-Baṣra. Then, Muhanna gathered the Arabs [his allies] and met the army of ʿUqayl, but he left the battle field without a fight or reaching an agreement. The army of Muhanna left more than ten thousand camels behind.'[447] It is obvious that even the Syrian nomads of Āl Faḍl shifted their alliance for some reason, and this time, the ʿUqaylids were the ones who were used to attack Āl Faḍl on behalf of the Mamlūks. It seems that once the nomads of Āl Faḍl captured al-Baṣra, they renounced the Mamlūk's authority and because of that the Mamlūks needed the service of the ʿUqaylids. Another piece of information shows the tribe of Āl Faḍl fought beside the Mongols of Iraq while the ʿUqaylids fought beside the Mamlūks, but this time, it was after the collapse of the Ilkhānids in *c*.1335 CE. Al-Ḥusainī (d.1364 CE) writes that in 1354 CE, the Arabs of Baḥrayn attempted to occupy al-Baṣra, which was under the post-Ilkhānid polity, the Jalāyrids (1336-1432 CE), but they were defeated by al-Ḥasan al-Kabīr al-Jalāyrī, who requested assistance from the Arabs of Syria, Āl Faḍl.[448] Yet, it is unknown whether the attempted occupation was instructed by the Mamlūks.

In 721/1321, the ʿUqaylids attacked an Iraqi pilgrimage caravan, which was sent by the Mongol sultan Abū Saʿīd to Makka, when it crossed the deserts of Baḥrayn. But when the caravan leaders informed the ʿUqaylids that they had permission from the Mamlūk Sultan al-Nāṣir, the Arabs then halted the attack and offered their protection free of charge.[449]

For all these services, the ʿUqaylids were generously rewarded by the Mamlūks, who granted their leaders three ranks according to their importance and diplomatic representational level. Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh (d.1384 CE), who was an administrator in the Mamlūk army and perhaps worked in the chancery, records the names of the ʿUqaylid leaders, most of whom were sons of Mānīʿ. He records their leaders as following: In the first rank: Ṣadaqa ibn Ibrāhīm Abū Dalf, who was the emir; Muḥammad ibn Mānīʿ; Ḥusain ibn Mānīʿ and ʿAlī ibn Manṣūr. In the second rank he records Badrān ibn Mānīʿ, Rāshid ibn Mānīʿ, Kalbī ibn Mājid ibn Badrān, Mānīʿ ibn ʿAlī, Mānīʿ ibn Badrān, Rūmī ibn Abī Dalf, Zayn ibn Qāsim, Yūsuf ibn Qāsim, Saʿīd ibn

[447] Abū al-Fidā, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol.4, 84.
[448] Al-Dhahabī wa-al-Ḥusainī, *Min Dhuyūl al-'Ibar* (Kuwait: Maṭbaʿat Ḥukūmat al-Kuwait, 1970), 302. This source does not describe them as the ʿUqaylids, but as the Arabs of Baḥrayn.
[449] Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk fī Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Mustafa Ziyāda (al-Qāhira: n.p., 1941), vol.1, 214-215.

Maʿdī, ʿĪsā ibn ʿArafa; Ẓālim ibn Mujāshiʿ and Ismāʿīl ibn Ṣawārī. In the third rank, he records ʿAẓim ibn Ḥasan ibn Māniʿ, Zayd ibn Māniʿ, Muʿammar ibn Māniʿ, Mūsā ibn Abī al-Ḥasan, Saʿd ibn Maghāmis, Hilāl ibn Yaḥyā and Muḥammad ibn Khalīfa. [450]

The problem with this record is that Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh does not write the full names; hence, I am not sure who Māniʿ was. Was he a son of ʿAlī ibn Mājid, as recorded by Vaṣṣāf?[451] Or a son of ʿUṣfūr ibn Rāshid, as al-Ḥumaydān and al-Janbī suggest without presenting an evidence?[452] The latter two obviously put together this report with other reports that speak of Baḥrayn being at the hands of ʿUṣfūr and his sons and hence they supposed that Māniʿ was the son of ʿUṣfūr. I find it difficult to decide upon the right identity, yet it is likely that he was the same person that Vaṣṣāf wrote about, Māniʿ ibn ʿAlī ibn Mājid. Another problem is that we do not know during which Mamlūk sultan this list was made. Perhaps it was during al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn's reign because of his close relationship with the ʿUqaylids.

It is unlikely that the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn reached the same level as that of the Syrian tribes of Āl Faḍl and Āl Mirā in terms of Mamlūk patronage. The sources do not speak of a Mamlūk designation of an *amīr al-ʿArab* for the ʿUqaylids as the Mamlūks did with the Syrian tribes. Also we do not read about any *iqṭāʿāt* that were granted to the ʿUqaylids. These two tools were essential to any empire for incorporating the tribes into the 'state'. We should also remember that Syria was officially ruled by the Mamlūks, whereas Baḥrayn and central Arabia were not among their territories. Therefore, we can deduce that the Baḥraynī tribe was not integrated into the Mamlūk governing scheme, but was only an ally which formed its relationship according to the common interests of both sides.

The potential reasons behind the unwillingness of the Mamlūks to grant the Baḥraynī nomads *iqṭāʿāt* in their territories might have been that they did not want to mobilise the Baḥraynī tribes to Egypt or Syria. If the Mamlūks did so, they would lose the advantage of the geographic location where the ʿUqaylids' served the Mamlūk strategy against the Iraqi caravans. Moreover, the mobilisation from Baḥrayn to Syria would certainly cause conflicts between the

[450] Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh, *Kitab Tathqīf al-Taʿrīf*, 82-83; Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshā fī Ṣināʿat al-Inshā* (al-Qāhira: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Amīriyya, 1915), vol.7, 371.
[451] ʿAbdullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-e Vaṣṣāf*, 105-106.
[452] ʿAbdulaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 64; *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 555 in his drawing of the ʿUṣfūrid family tree.

Syrian tribes and the newly arrived Baḥraynī tribes, which would have harmed the Mamlūks' interest and security.

3.6 The ʿUqaylids as Caravan Merchants.

The ʿUqaylids were geographically close to the recently thriving seaports of the Gulf operated by the pro-Mongol Iranian-based polities which also ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. They benefited from the economic growth and were involved in the trade by transporting goods mainly overland and sometimes via sea. Another key factor for the ʿUqaylids' success in this business was their fruitful relationship with the Mamlūks, especially during the long reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (r.1309-1340 CE). Perhaps we could date the ʿUqaylids' serious involvement in the trade to 1323 CE after the end of the Mamlūk-Mongol War.

Janet Abu-Lughod states that 'in the fourteenth century, the Gulf and the Red Sea were rival seas.'[453] Indeed, as we have seen the Mamlūks and the Mongols were in war and fought via proxies in Syria and north Arabia. Because of this, the ʿUqaylids possessed additional importance for the Mamlūks other than acting as political and military agents against the Mongols. There was a prospect that the Mongols and their vassals in the Gulf block the sea lanes and prevent the ships which came from the East from reaching the seaports of the Mamlūks in the Red Sea.[454] Therefore, perhaps in order for the Mamlūks to maintain the supply of the goods of the East, they may have sought to secure access to the Gulf via the ʿUqaylids in east Arabia, who would constitute an additional or alternative line for commodities.

The ʿUqaylids, as al-ʿUmarī describes, arrived in Cairo as professional merchants. They would travel annually to Cairo bringing with them commodities from Baḥrayn, India, Persia and Iraq, such as luxury clothing, pearls and other goods. They also brought Arabian horses to the

[453] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 206.
[454] The strategy of diverting maritime trade route by empires that had control over the Red Sea and the Gulf has a long history and was applied by many empires, such as the Byzantines and the Sāsānids then the Fāṭimids and the Seljūqs. We have already discussed the latter in Chapter One.

Sultan, who was obsessed with such animals. They would also return from Cairo carrying goods, such as sugar, fabrics, camels, goats and sheep.[455]

Al-Maqrīzī reports that in 1321 CE, the Arabs of Baḥrayn arrived with 40 horses, which were purchased by the sultan and the Arabs were also generously rewarded. He also writes that in the following year 1322 CE, the Arabs of Baḥrayn came again to Egypt with 130 horses which were purchased, and the Arabs were also rewarded.[456]

The ʿUqaylids' economic activity was perhaps in a way similar to that of the ancient Nabataeans and Gerrhaeans. The former had established a nomadic kingdom based in Petra in north Arabia and the latter based in Gerrha in eastern Arabia. The Gerrhaeans and Nabataeans developed an extensive network of overland trade routes that linked India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Syria, Egypt and Abyssinia together. They monopolised the traffic of spices, perfumes and luxury goods and constituted a major resource of necessary goods for many landlocked towns in the Near East.[457]

The ʿUqaylids may have been responsible for reviving that ancient role after its long abruption. The ʿUqaylids then continuously sustained and developed their trade and transit activities, which covered Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and North Africa, until the mid-twentieth century. Ḥamad al-Jāsir suggests that the ʿUqaylids were the origins of the famous caravan traders known as *al-tujjār al-ʿUqaylāt.* These merchants organisation later became relatively open to other merchants from other tribes, families and areas.[458] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibrāhīm rejects this argument and suggests that the 'al-ʿUqaylāt' was an Ottoman organisation and that the name was given after the *ʿiqāl* (headband), which was worn by the merchants to hold their headscarves as special clothing for the Arab merchants and soldiers of Najd.[459] It seems that al-Jāsir's opinion

[455] Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf fiʾl-Musṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusain Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1988), 114.
[456] Aḥmad Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk fī Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, vol.2 pr.1, 229, 336.
[457] See G. W. Bowersock, *Roman* Arabia (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Nelson Glueck, *Deities and Dolphins: The Story of the Nabataeans* (New York: Straus and Giroux, 1965), 529-530; Jean Starcky, 'The Nabataeans: A Historical Sketch' *The Biblical Archaeologist* 18/4 (1955): 81-82, 84-106.
[458] H. Kindermann, 'ʿUḳayl.' *EI*^{2}; J.L. Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys* (London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1831), 28-9; Nöldeke, 'A review of W. Robertson Smith book Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 40 (1886): 183, n.4.
[459] Ḥamad al-Jāsir, 'Taʿlīq li-Majallat al-ʿArab', a*l-Watheekah* 3, 2 (1982): 75; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibrāhīm, *Najdiyyūn warāʾ al-Ḥudūd: al-ʿUqaylāt wa-Dawruhum fīʿAlāqāt Najd al-ʿAskariyya wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyya bi-l-ʿIrāq waʾl-Shām wa-Miṣr (1750-1950 CE)* (Beirut: Dār al-Sāqī, 2014), 25-32.

is more accurate because the Ottomans built upon an already existing organisation. Also, the name ‘ʿUqaylāt’ is a clear derivation from the tribe of ʿUqayl, especially given that the suffix ‘āt’ at the end of the name ‘ʿUqayl’ refers colloquially to members of a tribe. Tribal names of the like are abundant, for example, al-Ḥuwayṭāt, al-ʿUqaydāt, al-Nufayʿāt, al-Nuṣayrāt, al-Jubārāt and al-Uḥaywāt and others, as recorded by Max von Oppenheim in his book, *Die Beduinen*.[460]

3.7 The ʿUqaylid Emirate’s Political Decline.

The ʿUqaylids lost their central political leadership as a tribe and emirate and became fragmented into many sub-groups, as Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī briefly writes.[461] It is unknown when exactly that occurred, but it certainly occurred before the death of al-ʿUmarī in 1348 CE.

We can only suggest hypotheses to explain the reasons of their schism and political dissolution. The first hypothesis is that the end of the Mamlūk-Ilkhānid War in 1323 CE and then the collapse of the Ilkhānate in 1335 CE were responsible for the political disunity and then the decline of the ʿUqaylid emirate. A similar historical example could be the polities of the Jafnids and the Naṣrids, who were clients of the Romans and Sāsānids in pre-Islamic Fertile Crescent. Greg Fisher, who attempted to understand the reason of their decline, compared the political development of the entities of Western nomads, that is, the Goths, Franks and Vandals, with the Arab Jafnids and Naṣrids after the collapse of the Roman power. He argued that the Western tribes transformed themselves from similar state-like polities into young states, whereas the Near Eastern nomads, that is, the Jafnids and the Naṣrids, failed to develop their political entities, which was a factual sign of their dependency on imperial sponsorship.[462] In light of this analysis, we could suggest that the end of the Mamlūk-Ilkhānid war and the fragmentation of the Mongols into many polities after the collapse of the Ilkhānate in 1335 CE had dramatically minimised the importance of the ʿUqaylids as political and military clients. The tribe began to receive less

[460] See the list of tribes provided in Max von Oppenheim, *Die Beduinen*, Unter Mitbearbeitung von Erich Bräunlich und Werner Caskel. Bd. I: *Die Beduinenstämme in Mesopotamien und Syrien* (Leipzig, 1939), 215; Bd. II: *Die Beduinenstämme in Palästin, Transjordanien, Sinai, Hedjaz* (Leipzig, 1944), 47, 49, 81, 149, 154.
[461] Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf fiʾl-Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, 114.
[462] Greg Fisher, *Between Empires*, 126-127.

patronage from the Mamlūk Sultanate and therefore the dependent tribe gradually declined. This dependency is a sign and characteristic of polities in peripheral areas, as explained Wilkinson.[463]

The second hypothesis that could be posed is that because of the transformation of the ʿUqaylids into professional merchants and caravan leaders, their new economic situation contributed to the changing of their tribal socio-political structure and living pattern. Accordingly, the tribe minimised its nomadic military activities, which previously required a centralised leadership, and began to reorganise itself in a way that required multiple leaders for smaller merchant groups or families. These smaller tribal groups of caravan merchants may have had different priorities of interest. They perhaps began to prioritise their private family interests over the common interest of the entire tribe, which led to conflicts and thus political decline.

4. A Problematic Item of Information Recorded by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī regarding the Jarwānids.

The historian and scholar Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d.1448) records in his biographical dictionary of Hijri eighth-century figures (fourteenth-century CE), *al-Durar al-kāmina fī aʿyān al-miʾa al-thāmina* a problematic piece of information regarding some Baḥraynī rulers: Saʿīd ibn Maghāmis, Jarwān al-Mālikī, his son Nāṣir and grandson Ibrāhīm. Ibn Ḥajar writes that Ibrāhīm's grandfather, Jarwān, took the rule from Saʿīd ibn Maghāmis ibn Sulaymān ibn Rumaytha al-Qurmuṭī in A.H 705 / 1305 CE and ruled the whole region of Baḥrayn. And when Jarwān died, his son Nāṣir took the leadership, and then his son Ibrāhīm, who was alive in A.H. 820 1417 CE, took power after Nāṣir. Ibn Ḥajar describes them as *kibār al-rawāfiḍ* (extreme Shīʿites). He also describes the Jarwānids as rulers of al-Qaṭīf, who belonged to Banī Mālik, a branch of the Quraysh.[464]

It is problematic for four reasons: first, the description of al-Qurmuṭī given to Saʿīd ibn Maghāmis does not accord with the historical context. The Qarāmiṭa were defeated as a polity more than two hundred years earlier; this report is possible only if the word 'al-Qurmuṭī' in his usage was a synonym of Ismāʿīlī or extreme Shīʿite, or perhaps the description came from the

[463] See the discussion of pre-modern peripherality in the introduction.
[464] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-Kāmina fī Aʿyān al-Miʾa al-Thāmina* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1993), vol.1, 73-74.

stereotypical image of Baḥrayn as the country of the Qarāmiṭa. Second, the full name of Saʿīd and his tribal affiliation is unknown. We read the name Saʿd ibn Maghāmis in the list given by Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh (d.1384), but it is unknown whether this was the same person or one of his relatives. Third, the attribution of Jarwān to the tribe of Quraysh is difficult to accept, because in that time, the ʿUqaylids were supremely dominant in the region. Perhaps the word Quraysh is an error from the copyists, and the right name is Qays, which indicates ʿAbd al-Qays, the Baḥraynī sedentary tribe. Fourth, if we calculate the years from 1305 to 1417, it will give us 112 years, which is a very long duration for only three rulers; it means that each Jarwānid ruler governed for about 37 years in average. Therefore, Ibn Ḥajar's pieces of information are loaded with errors and thus do not help in the narrative. Al-Ḥumaydān tried at length to analyse this problematic item of information to see whether it was in accord with the context. Although he accepted it, he made substantial corrections to the information. He corrected the name from Quraysh to ʿAbd al-Qays, and suggested that the date of 705 A.H. must have been an error and that there should be a number other than zero in the middle.[465] Ibn Ḥajar led recent historians to believe that there was a polity called the Jarwānid emirate.[466]

5. Conclusion.

This chapter focused on the history of Baḥrayn after the fall of the Uyūnid emirate from the early thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries. The region of Baḥrayn was divided between an indigenous Baḥraynī power and a succession of Iranian powers. The ʿUqaylid polity ruled the inland areas, such as al-Aḥsāʾ and the oases and deserts of Baḥrayn and central Arabia. The seaport city of al-Qaṭīf and the island of Uwāl were ruled by successive Iranian-based polities that began with the Salghūrid Atābegs of Fārs (1236-1282 CE), followed by the Mongols (1282-1291 CE), then their vassals the Ṭībids (1291-*c*.1335 CE), and later the Kingdom of Hormuz (*c*.1335-*c*.1475 CE). These polities were in contest over the political and economic supremacy of the Gulf. This subject lacks sources, especially local ones.

[465] ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'Imārat al-ʿUṣfūriyyīn', 62-66.
[466] See Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shiʿite Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 33-35; Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, *Tārīkh al-Khalīj wa-Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya*, 405-414.

Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf, under the Iranian-based polities, served as stations in the maritime trade network in the Gulf and were beyond the ʿUqaylid emirate's control for most of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Little information on the internal affairs of these cities is known. The economy seems to have improved because Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf became better connected to the Gulf trade. The Ṭībids established a successful horse business, and chose al-Qaṭīf as a place to breed the horses, which later attracted the ʿUqaylids. Moreover, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf witnessed religious reforms from the construction of a mosque in al-Qaṭīf, the building a second minaret and expansion in the al-Khamīs Mosque, as well as the establishment of religious endowments for the mosque's attendees. Nevertheless, Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf appear to have remained peripheral areas. Three main observations lead to this argument. First, they are rarely mentioned in the written sources. Second, when they are mentioned, they are portrayed as a refuge for defeated pretenders. Third, where such records exist, Uwāl is indicated as lacking central authority. Local leaders sometimes ruled the island temporarily until the king arrived and settled the political disorder.

The ʿUqaylid emirate, as a political model, could be described as a 'dimorphic state', a concept and term coined by Rowton and also applied by Heidemann on the nomadic emirates in northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia. The leader in this kind of state/polity lives in the city and presents himself as an urban ruler, but at the same time, he keeps his military power in the desert. Yet, the ʿUqaylids probably did not keep or develop the urban style of government of their predecessors, the Uyūnids.

The ʿUqaylids, led by Rāshid or his son ʿUṣfūr, seized power from the Uyūnids and established an emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf in the 1230s CE after the ʿUyūnid elite of landlords and merchants in al-Aḥsāʾ appear to have decided that the ʿUyūnid emirs were incapable of defending their economic interests from the ʿUqaylids and the Kīshids. They consequently agreed to pay their allegiance to the powerful ʿUqaylid leader, probably, Rāshid or his son ʿUṣfūr, who would spare their properties.

The leadership of the tribe was rotated from a leader of one ʿUqaylid branch to another. They likely were not led by a sole dynasty of one person, ʿUṣfūr, as previous studies have argued. Therefore, it is more accurate to name the nomadic polity of Baḥrayn during that period

as the ʿUqaylid emirate instead of the ʿUṣfūrid emirate, although ʿUṣfūr and some of his sons led the tribe in the early period of the emirate.

After the fall of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate at the hands of the Mongols in 1258 CE, and the emergence of the Mamlūks as a political power *vis-à-vis* the Mongols, the ʿUqaylids acted as buffers and were attracted by the Mamlūks to their side in their war against the Mongols after the battle of ʿAyn Jālūt in 1260 CE. The ʿUqaylids, although fluctuating between both sides according to their interest, remained for most of the war (1260-1323 CE) beside the Mamlūks. The Mamlūks allied with the ʿUqaylids for two main reasons. The first one was for military and political purposes; they entrusted the ʿUqaylids with the task of attacking the pilgrimage and trade caravans that came from Mongol territories in the routes of the Baḥraynī and central Arabian deserts. Moreover, they were instructed to launch raids on the tribes who were loyal to the Mongols as well as to raid the city of al-Baṣra, which was under the Mongols' authority. The second reason was for economic purpose. The ʿUqaylids would offer the Mamlūks an alternative overland line to the goods of the East that arrived in the seaports of the Gulf. In turn, the Mamlūks provided the ʿUqaylid leaders with allowances, luxury gifts and bestowed official rankings for diplomatic forms of address according to the Mamlūks protocols. Furthermore, the Mamlūks opened the Egyptian markets to the ʿUqaylids, who became themselves merchants, benefiting from the recently flourished economy in the Gulf.

The ʿUqaylids' rule over the region weakened gradually as a consequence of internal conflicts. Two hypotheses were given to explain the factors of the ʿUqaylids' schism and fall as a political entity. First, as a politico-economic factor, the lack of the empires' interest in the services of the ʿUqaylids as auxiliary army after the end of the Mongol-Mamlūk War in 1323 CE caused them to minimise their patronage; and since the ʿUqaylid leaders were dependent on patronage, financial shortages might have prevented them from confining the members of the tribe to a centralised leadership. Second, as a socio-economic factor, the transformation of the ʿUqaylids from mainly military warriors which required a central leadership, into merchants and caravan leaders changed the tribe's political structure into smaller family groups, each following their private trade interests which might have clashed with other family groups. The non-existance of a powerful leader who could keep the tribe politically integrated by organising the trade among its family groups may also have contributed to the decline.

The ʿUqaylids' economic role as merchants and caravan leaders was likely similar to that of the ancient Gerrhaeans in east Arabia and the Nabataeans in north Arabia. It is possible that the ʿUqaylid trading activities were the medieval roots of the modern caravan leaders known as the *al-tujjār al-ʿuqaylāt* or *al-ajīl*, who operated until the 1940s CE.

Chapter Six:

Literature in the Region of Baḥrayn *c.*1050–*c.*1400 CE

1. Introduction

The literature produced in the region of Baḥrayn *c.*1050-*c.*1400 CE was little, yet better known to non-Baḥraynīs than Baḥrayn's political history, especially in Iraq. The chapter presents the prose and poetry made under the ʿUyūnid and ʿUqaylid emirates. Nothing is known about Baḥraynī literature under the Iranian-based polities. As we only possess details from contemporary sources on a number of Baḥraynī poets and linguists, they will be taken to represent the class of 'men of letters' in the absence of confirmed information on other scholars who may have been present in the region.[467] The relationship between the emirs and the poets will be analysed.

The prose of this period is represented by: a) the letter sent to the Caliphate in Baghdād, which point to the existence of professional writers, and b) the commentary on the collection of Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry. Poetry is represented by poets who lived during the ʿUyūnid period, and two lived during the ʿUqaylid period. These poets were mentioned in al-Iṣbahānī's *Kharīdat al-qaṣr* and *Takmilat kharīdat al-qaṣr*, a number of them perhaps were never discussed in modern studies. These sources also provide excerpts of their poems.

Although we have discussed *Sharḥ dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab* in previous chapters as an historical document, here this source will be dealt with as a literary text, relying, in great part, on the works of recent scholars of Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry. This chapter also attempts to construct his biography.

[467] Scholars, such as Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm, Aḥmad ibn Saʿāda, ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān, Maytham ibn ʿAlī, and others, who have long been held to be Baḥraynīs, will be the subject of the final chapter, which concerns the question of scholars and scholarship in Baḥrayn.

2. Prose

The only medieval Baḥraynī prose text to have reached us is the commentary on the poetry collection, *Sharḥ dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab*, which has been already utilised as an historical source in the previous chapters.[468] However, almost no lengthy examination has been conducted on the commentary as a piece of literature, apart from the poetry. In contrast, the poetry of Ibn al-Muqarrab has received the majority of the academic studies. My work here is limited to a) a discussion on the identity of the anonymous author, the period in which the text was written, and b) a presentation of general remarks on the author's style.

The identity of the commentator is unknown; nonetheless, suggestions were given by recent scholars. Safa Khulusi suggests the commentator to have been Abū al-Baqāʾ al-ʿUkburī (d.1219 CE), who commented on the *dīwān* of the famous poet al-Mutanabbī (d.965 CE). His suggestion was based on the similarity in style of both commentaries as well as al-ʿUkburī's friendship with Ibn al-Muqarrab.[469] However, this is unlikely because when Ibn al-Muqarrab travelled to Iraq his *dīwān* was not complete as we see many poems and commentaries that describe events occurred after the death of al-ʿUkburī in 1219 CE.

Al-Janbī suggests that the bulk of the commentary was dictated or written by Ibn al-Muqarrab, leaving room for the possibility that another anonymous commentator also contributed to the work. Al-Janbī provides ten examples from the *Sharḥ dīwān* that demonstrate first-person narrative or the use of first-person singular words. For instance, the first example occurs in connection with a verse of Ibn al-Muqarrab which includes the description *al-nuṭaf al-ḥarām*; the comment added is: '*aʿnī awlād al-zinā*' ('I mean the bastards'). Second, the commentator comments on the verse of '*yakhālu al-ḍayfa yaqriṣu ḥājibayhi walā siyyamā idhā iḥtaḍar al-ṭaʿām*' by writing '*wa ajaztu liʾl-rāwī an yarwiyahā: yanmiṣu ḥājibayh*' ('I permit the narrator to narrate it as: to thread his eyebrows.)[470] Indeed, the commentary appears inconsistent in terms of its style of writing. It is likely that more than one commentator wrote exegeses and added anecdotes to the work. It may also be observed that the commentary contains detailed information on the names of Baḥraynī oases, wells, springs, types of palms and dates,

[468] See the introduction for the discussion on its manuscripts.
[469] Safa Khulusi, 'A Thirteenth Century Poet from Bahrain' *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 6 (1976): 92; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 753-759.
[470] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 141-142.

minor tribes, families and even colloquial words, which points to the possibility that it may have been written by local Baḥraynī men of letters. Furthermore, since it provides more information on al-Aḥsāʾ and al-Qaṭīf than on Uwāl, we could suggest that the commentator(s) was a resident of either al-Aḥsāʾ or al-Qaṭīf.

The commentary was written perhaps during the late period of and shortly after the fall of the ʿUyūnid emirate. Al-Janbī again provides examples in which the commentator's descriptions of thirteenth-century dynasties and major events are depicted as being contemporaneous to him. When the commentator comments on a verse that speaks about the Mongols, he writes 'the Tatar in our time is a Turkmen tribe which came from China and devastated the Muslim lands until they reached Marāgha, and they have killed and evacuated a large number of Muslims.' Al-Janbī made from this that the commentary was produced in around 1221 CE, the date of the Mongol conquest of Marāgha.[471]

A general description of the commentary as a literary text could be reported as follow: The author(s) typically comments on selected verses and offers brief explanations for words that he deems unfamiliar to the reader. Such explanations are very short and resemble the style of a concise Arabic lexicon. Occasionally, the author adds Arabic proverbs, anecdotes from Arabic folklore, mythology, parallel and explanatory verses from the Qurʾān, Sunna (*aḥādīth*) and other poems and poets to clarify the meaning and the sense of the words or verses. Sometimes, he provides background information or outlines the reason for the production of a particular verse. The author also occasionally offers etymological interpretations of a number of words. The commentary is devoid of deep and critical exegeses that accentuate the aesthetics of the poems. An important point to note, which has already been discussed in a previous chapter on the ʿUyūnids, concerns the linguistic weakness that sometimes appears when the commentator reports particular historical events. This inconsistency is another reason for suggesting that the commentary was composed by more than one author, who possessed of various levels of linguistic abilities.

Another Baḥraynī prose text is extant, although it is short and is included in *Sharḥ dīwān*, it seems to be independent from it. This text is the letter sent by the emir of Uwāl Abū al-Buhlūl

[471] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 141-142.

Āl Zajjāj to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph in *c*.1064 CE.[472] Neither the letter, nor the commentator, reveals the identity of the actual writer. It might be Abū al-Buhlūl or someone else worked for him as a writer.[473] In any case, the letter displays a professional level of linguistic and artistic skill. The writer formed the text in the rhythmic style of *sajʿ*, which involves ending successive sentences using words with the same final letter and sometimes with the same rhyme. The letter is full of bombastic words and expressions. It reflects a mastery of written diplomacy and the knowledge of political titles and religio-political language that includes prayers for God to support the ʿAbbāsids and their *daʿwā* (religious propagation) against other religious doctrines, most importantly Qarmaṭism and Ibāḍism.[474]

We should remember that the ʿUyūnids possessed a chancery and *dawāwīn* (public records, rolls). One of which was run by al-Muqarrab, the father of the poet ʿAlī.[475] Some poets, as we will see below, were described as a *kātib*, a professional writer. Taken together the existence of the ʿUyūnid chancery, writers/men of letters, records or rolls, the commentary and the letter, we may suggest the existence of a tradition of linguistic learning in Baḥrayn, which overshadowed other fields of scholarship.

3. Poets and Poetry

3.1 The Poet Muʾammal al-Aḥsāwī (Lived around 1142-1153 CE)

One of the earliest Baḥraynī poets who have lived under the ʿUyūnid emirate was Muʾammal al-Aḥsāwī, who recited his poetry in the court of the ʿUyūnid emir of al-Qaṭīf, Abū Alī al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī (r. *c*.1142-1154 CE). Muʾammal is mentioned in ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī's *Kharīdat al-qaṣr*. Al-Iṣbhānī had a friend in al-Baṣra called ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ismāʿīl al-ʿAbdī al-Baṣrī, a native of the ʿAbd al-Qays community of al-Baṣra, who, apparently, travelled frequently to the region of Baḥrayn, where he possessed many friends among the 'men of letters' of the region. He was a plentiful source of information on Baḥrayn for al-Iṣbahānī.

[472] See Chapter Two for discussion on the history of this emirate. Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 988-995.
[473] See Chapter Two.
[474] See its contents in Chapter Two and Seven.
[475] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1008-9.

The emir al-Ḥasan, who appears to have been familiar with and fond of poetry, requested that the poet Muʾammal al-Aḥsāwī compose a poem resembling a famous work which began: *yā silsilat al-raml bi-ʾlluwaylib fa-l-ḥāl*. Muʾammal duly composed a poem which he later sent to ʿAlī al-ʿAbdī, who passed it in turn to al-Iṣbahānī. Unfortunately, al-Iṣbahānī did not include the poem in full, instead recording only one verse.[476]

3.2 Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Sukūnī al-ʿAbdī (alive in 1159 CE).

ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, in his *Takmilat kharīdat al-qaṣr wa-jarīdat al-ʿaṣr (qism shuʿarāʾ al-ʿIrāq),* writes about two poets from al-Qaṭīf who lived in the twelfth century, citing his informant ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ismaʿīl al-ʿAbdī al-Baṣrī. In 1162 CE, al-Baṣrī told al-Iṣbahānī that he had travelled to al-Qaṭīf in 1159 CE, during the reign of Qiwām al-Dīn ibn al-Manṣūr al-ʿAzīz ibn al-Muqallad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿAbdī,[477] who accommodated him in a district called al-ʿAṭash. There, he met the poet Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Sukūnī al-ʿAbdī (from the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays) and also met the judge of al-Qaṭīf, ʿAlī ibn Abī al-Hawāris. Al-Sukūnī asked al-Baṣrī to teach him some Arabic prosody; al-Baṣrī accepted and duly taught him until such time as the poet had mastered it. Al-Sukūnī then recited some of his poems, which al-Baṣrī passed in turn to al-Iṣbahānī.[478] The themes and features of al-Sukūnī's poetry are wisdom, melancholy, desire for solitude, criticism of society's ignorance and immorality, and the injustice of rulers.

In several verses al-Sukūnī criticises the Arabs for being unjust, saying that they had been dishonest before the coming of Muḥammad, and only became worse after Islam. The editor of the book, al-Atharī, deduced from these verses that the poet may have been an esoteric Qurmuṭī, which might be true. In any case, the poet seems to have been critical of the ʿUyūnid emirs.

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[476] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-Shām*, ed. Shukrī Faiṣal. (Dimashq: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Hāshimiyya, 1959), vol.2, 245: Muʾammal recites:

يا مَنْزِلَ سَلْمَى بذي الكَهَثْبَلِ فالضَّالْ غاداكَ من المُزْنِ كلُّ أَسْحَمَ هَطَّالْ

[477] He did not write the name 'al-ʿUyūnī'.

[478] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Takmilat Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: (Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-'Irāq)*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: Maṭbaʿat Majmaʿ al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya, 1980), 851-859.

3.3 Al-Ḥusain ibn Thābit ibn al-Ḥusain al-ʿAbdī al-Jadhamī (alive in 1155 CE).

The second poet from al-Qaṭīf to feature in al-Iṣbahānī's biographical dictionary is al-Ḥusain ibn Thābit ibn al-Ḥusain al-ʿAbdī al-Jadhamī, who also hailed from the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays and the branch of Judhayma. Al-Iṣbahānī again derives his information from his friend ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan al-ʿAbdī al-Baṣrī, who described al-Jadhamī as a poet, writer and genealogist, who fled al-Qaṭīf for Oman in 550/1155, where he later died. While in al-Qaṭīf, al-Jadhamī was persecuted and imprisoned by the emir Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī. Al-Baṣrī stated that he met the poet's brother in al-Qaṭīf. He added that while visiting the island of Tārūt, he met a man called Abū Shukr ʿAbd al-Qays ibn ʿAlī, who informed him that al-Jadhamī had composed a long poem during his time in prison, addressing his cousins and invoking the kinship ties with them so that they might assist in convincing the emir to release him. In this poem, the poet mentioned approximately fifty branches of the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays: the poem could therefore represent a valuable source for the genealogy of ʿAbd al-Qays.[479]

3.4 ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ismāʿīl al-ʿAbdī al-Baṣrī (Early Thirteenth Century).

This poet has been already mentioned in the previous short biographies as the informant of al-ʿImād al-Iṣbahānī. It is unclear whether he was a native of al-Baṣra or al-Qaṭīf. He belonged to the ʿAbd al-Qays tribe and was said to have worked in Baghdād. He had accompanied al-Iṣbahānī on his journey to al-Baṣra, and there he provided information regarding the Baḥraynī poets as he was a frequent traveller to Baḥrayn. Al-Iṣbahānī described ʿAlī al-ʿAbdī as a young man who had received a religious education and was a traditionist (*shābb min ahl al-ʿilm wa-aṣḥāb al-ḥaīth*), but did not say where.[480] ʿAlī recited a number of poems to al-Iṣbahānī, including one which focused on his dissatisfaction and annoyance at being a resident of al-Qaṭīf and the island of Tārūt in 1159 CE, where he suffered from hunger. It is unclear if this hunger was limited to himself and his family, or was an indication of a famine and a symptom of the region's declining economy. Unfortunately, al-Iṣbahānī was very reserved in terms of providing

[479] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Takmilat Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: (Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-ʿIrāq)*, 860-867.
[480] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: (Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-ʿIrāq)*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: Wazārat al-Iʿlām, 1973), vol.2, part.4, 683-684.

details about the political environment and events in Baḥrayn. He restricted himself to giving brief biographical information and a selection of verses

ʿAlī's mother is described as *muʾaddaba* (an educated woman). She was also a poet who exchanged letters with her son in poetry. Her name was al-Rashīda bint al-Faqīh Abī al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Muʾammal ibn Tammām al-Tamīmī al-Mālikī and she was apparently the daughter of a Sunni Mālikī jurist from the tribe of Banū Tamīm. Her short biography and brief verses of poetry do not reveal whether or not she possessed any connection with Baḥrayn, apart from her son, and of course her husband, who were of Baḥraynī origin.[481]

3.5 Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī al-Irbilī (d.1189 CE).

Abū ʿAbdullāh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāʾid al-Baḥrānī al-Irbilī was described as a famous poet, outstanding Arabic linguist and critic, who mastered Arabic prosody and various types of poetry. In addition, he was reported to have studied philosophy and engineering and had a particular interest in math, which led him to comment on the work of Euclid. He produced a *dīwān* of poems and wrote several treatises.

According to al-Yāfiʿī (d.1367 CE), he was born and raised in Baḥrayn to a pearls merchant father. He learned the art of poetry from the Arabs/Bedouins of Baḥrayn. He later relocated to Shahrizūr in northern Iraq (now in Iraqi Kurdistan), where he lived for some time before leaving for Damascus; here he served Saladin (r.1174-1193 CE) and panegyrised him. He also panegyrised the ruler of Irbil, Abū al-Muẓaffar.[482] Again, it is unclear to what extent he remained connected to Baḥrayn after he had left the region, but he certainly benefited from the poets of the region. His move from Baḥrayn to Iraq, then Syria to seek knowledge of philosophy and mathematics, as well as employment under significant rulers, may reflect his view of Baḥrayn as an area characterised in its limited scholarship and lack of opportunity which did not satisfy his aspirations.

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[481] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr*, vol.2, part.4, 685-670.

[482] ʿAbdullāh al-Yāfiʿī, *Mirʾāt al-Jinān wa-ʿIbrat al-Yaqaẓān fī Maʿrifat Ḥawādith al-Zamān,* ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), vol.3, 327; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī fiʾl-Wafayāt*, ed. Sven Dedering (Stutgart: Kommissionsverlag Franz Steiner, 1991), vol.5, 251.

4. ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī (1176-1230s/40s CE): His Biography and Poetry.

The Baḥraynī ʿUyūnid poet ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab gained a considerable fame. His name and excerpts of his poetry are mentioned by a large number of biographers, many of whom had met him personally and obtained information from him directly.[483] For example, Ibn al-Muqarrab told Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī (d.1245 CE) and Ibn al-Shaʿʿār al-Mūṣilī (d.1256) that he was born in A.H 572 / 1176 CE in al-Aḥsāʾ in an area called al-ʿUyūn.[484]

Little is known about his early education and the identities of Ibn al-Muqarrab's teachers. We understand from the Iraqi biographers who met him that when he came to Iraq he was already a poet. This means that he received his education in al-Aḥsāʾ or al-Qaṭīf, but unfortunately, Ibn al-Muqarrab neither referenced his schooling in his poetry nor informed the biographers. Even the anonymous commentator on his collection of poems did not mention anything about this matter throughout the book. Yet, as we have pointed out, Ibn al-Muqarrab was the son of an official who worked in the ʿUyūnid chancery. This suggests that the poet may have received linguistic training in order to succeed his father later, as this kind of jobs used to pass from father to son. The poet also alludes in several verses to having spent considerable time during his childhood and teenage years in his hometown, al-ʿUyūn and his mother's hometown, al-Yamāma in central Arabia. He says in his poetry that his mother belonged to the tribe of Banū Ḥanīfa of Bakr ibn Wāʾil.[485] Al-ʿAmmārī observes that Ibn al-Muqarrab was heavily influenced by the Arabic pre-Islamic poems and mythologies of the tribes of Bakr and Taghlib, which can be clearly observed in some of his poems.[486] Accordingly, he may have also acquired his linguistic and rhetorical skills from his Bedouin uncles.

An uneasy relationship developed between the later ʿUyūnid emirs and ʿAlī's family. The poet's father was persecuted by the ʿUyūnid emir Muḥammad ibn Mājid. He was jailed and stripped of his properties and his personal wealth, they were later returned. Ibn al-Muqarrab

[483] For a full bibliography on ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī in Arabic and English, see Ṣalāḥ Kazāra, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh fiʾl-Maṣādir al-ʿArabiyya wa-l-Ajnabiyya* (Kuwait: Muʾasasat Jāʾizat ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Suʿūd al-Bābṭain, 2002)

[484] Al-Mubārak ibn al-Shaʿʿār al-Mūṣilī, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, n.d.), vol.5, 66-70.

[485] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 242.

[486] Faḍl Al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya* (al-Riyāḍ: Maktabat al-Tawba, 1413/1992), 171.

himself suffered the same persecution, but it was performed by the emir's son, Mājid ibn Muḥammad ibn Mājid, who never returned the poet's properties, although the poet attempted several times to attract the emirs' sympathies by reciting panegyric poems for them.[487] The reason for such persecution is unclear. Perhaps their relationship was characterised by this antagonism, as al-ʿAmmārī suggests, due to the disappointment of Ibn al-Muqarrab regarding the emirs' leadership of the polity and their submission to the Bedouins, in addition to Ibn al-Muqarrab's desire to see a united polity instead of the fragmentation of the ʿUyūnid emirate.[488] It might be added that Ibn al-Muqarrab was perhaps known for his inclination to and preference of the emirs of the branch of al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī, whom his father served in their chancery.[489] Therefore, because of his turbulent relationship with the emirs, Ibn al-Muqarrab travelled to Iraq where he met scholars, poets and officials, and recited his poems in the courts of governors, such as the governor of al-Baṣra, Pātkīn (d.1242 CE)[490] and the governor of Mosul, Badr al-Dīn Luʾluʾ (d.1259 CE).[491] Niazi states that Ibn al-Muqarrab's source provides exclusive historical information that is not available elsewhere.[492]

Ibn al-Muqarrab visited Baghdād frequently between the years of 1213 CE and 1226 CE and met many figures, such as al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad ibn al-Dabīthī (d.1240 CE) writer of *Dhayl tārīkh madīnat al-salām*, and Ibn Nuqṭa al-Baghdādī al-Ḥanbalī (d.1230 CE). He visited the Niẓāmiyya madrasa, where he met its staff and recited some of his poetry; his work was praised, especially by Ibn al-Najjār.[493]

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[487] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 12-17.
[488] Faḍl Al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya*, 159-169.
[489] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 10.
[490] Pātkīn was a *mawlā* (client) of the mother of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir. He was entrusted with the governorship of al-Baṣra. He was described by al-Ṣafadī as a just governor who engaged in many projects such as the refurbishment of the primary mosque, the building of schools, a hospital, a wall around al-Baṣra and a dome for the shrine of Ṭalḥa ibn ʿUbaydullāh, the companion of the Prophet, who fought ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib in the battle of al-Jamal and was killed after he withdrew from it in 656 CE. See Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī fiʾl-Wafayāt* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2000), vol.10, 41; Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 351.
[491] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 18, vol.2, 732.
[492] Salah Niazi, 'An Edition of the Diwan of Ali ibn al-Muqarraband a critical Study' (PhD diss., University of London, 1975), vol.1, 12-13.
[493] Ṣalāḥ Kazāra, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī*, 22-26 cited two manuscipts. The first: Ibn Nuqṭa al-Baghdādī, 'al-Istidrāk aw al-Mustadrak ʿalā Kitāb al-Ikmāl fī Rafʿ al-Irtiyāb ʿan al-Muʾtalif wa-l-Mukhtalif fiʾl-Asmāʾ wa-l-Kunā wa-l-Alqāb'. From Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya number 10, 629-adab. The second: Ibn al-Dabīthī, 'Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād'. From Maʿhad al-Makhṭūṭāt al-ʿArabiyya in Cairo and in the library of Shahīd ʿAlī in Istanbul, number 1170; Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAbdulqādir ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), vol.19, 121.

He also travelled to the cities of Irbil, Mosul, Wāsiṭ and al-Baṣra. Yāqūt writes in his *Muʿjam al-buldān* in the entry of al-ʿUyūn that he met in Mosul in 1220 CE a poet from al-ʿUyūn called ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab, who delivered a panegyric poem at the court of the ruler of Mosul Badr al-Dīn LuʾLuʾ (d.657/1259), after he had been attempting to reach Diyār Bakr to attend the court of al-Malik al-Ashraf, who had left the country to fight the Crusaders in Dumyāṭ in Egypt. Yāqūt did not, however, appreciate Ibn al-Muqarrab's verses; in contrast to other biographers such as Ibn al-Najjār.[494]

Ibn al-Muqarrab's date and place of death are not known with any certainty. Contemporary historians gave three dates: 629/1231 in Baḥrayn according to al-Mundhirī, 630/1232 in Baḥrayn according to Ibn al-Shaʿʿār and 631/1233 in al-Aḥsāʾ according to Ibn al-Najjār.[495] In addition, a manuscript written by an anonymous tenth/sixteenth-century author, and currently located in the Egyptian National Library and Archive, holds that Ibn al-Muqarrab died in an Omani coastal village called Ṭīwī.[496] Al-Janbī and his colleagues made a trip to that village and asked its people what they knew regarding Ibn al-Muqarrab. They were surprised to learn that the people knew Ibn al-Muqarrab and could tell a folkloric story about him and the reason he came to their village. They showed al-Janbī the location of what they believed to be his tomb. Another folkloric story was provided by the older people of the village of al-Baṭṭāliyya in al-Aḥsāʾ in Saudi Arabia. They told al-Janbī that Ibn al-Muqarrab fled the country to Oman.

Therefore, it would appear that there is a consensus regarding his place of death among the current indigenous people of al-Aḥsāʾ and Ṭīwī in Oman, which differs from what is written in Iraqi biographical dictionaries. Al-Janbī is inclined to believe that the dates given by biographers were incorrect and that the poet lived until at least 651/1254. He bases his view upon three pieces of evidence. First, he believes that the appendix of the *Sharḥ dīwān*, which constitutes a list of the ʿUyūnid emirs, the last of whom lived until 1236 CE or 1239 CE, was dictated by Ibn al-Muqarrab to the commentator. Second, the Twelver Shīʿī biographer al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī (d.1104/1693) wrote in the entry for Ibn al-Muqarrab in his biographical dictionary

[494] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldan*, vol.4, 180-181; Anynomous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 17-18.
[495] Al-Mubārak ibn al-Shaʿʿār al-Mūṣilī, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol.5, 66-70; Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol.19, 122; ʿAbdulʿaẓīm al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila li-Wafayāt al-Naqala* (al-Qāhira: ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-Shurakāh, 1396[1976]), vol.3, 325-326 (entry: 2434).
[496] The editor of Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.3 216 cited a manuscript from The Egyptian National Library number 637/tārīkh.

Amal al-āmil that he read poems of Ibn al-Muqarrab dated to 651/1254, but did not write them down. Third, al-Janbī depends on a folk story from the people of al-Aḥsāʾ, who narrate that Ibn al-Muqarrab, despairing of the Bedouins' control over the emirate, killed a large number of them by means of a trick. Close to a stream he built a castle, the pillars of which were made of salt. He then dug a small canal in order to link the stream with the castle's salt pillars, but he separated them with a barrier. Having finished these preparations, he invited the Bedouins to a feast in the castle; as they ate he removed the barrier between the small canal and the salt pillars of the castle, allowing it to collapse on the Bedouins. In order to avoid the Bedouins' revenge, Ibn al-Muqarrab created a rumour that he had died, and then fled al-Aḥsāʾ for Oman in secret. The rumour may have been extant in 1233 CE and reached the Iraqi biographers.[497] However, even these pieces of evidence lack solidity, and there is no definite way to establish when and where Ibn al-Muqarrab died.

The poetry of Ibn al-Muqarrab has been the focus of critical study since the 1960s. A considerable number of publications have appeared in the form of university dissertations, books, conference papers, peer-reviewed journal articles, magazines and newspaper articles. Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry encompassed several genres, including panegyric, narrative, satire and elegy, and touched upon themes such as nostalgia, wisdom and pride.

Ibn al-Muqarrab was a court poet who recited his panegyrical poetry in many courts, including that of the ʿUyūnid emirs who were the recipients of most of this praise. Poems were also delivered to: the Abbasid Caliphs al-Nāṣir (r.1180–1225 CE) and al-Mustanṣir (r.1226-1242 CE); the governor of al-Baṣra, Pātkīn, and the governor of Mosul, Badr al-Dīn LuʾLuʾ; an ʿAbbāsid official, al-Muḥsin ibn Hibatuallāh al-Dawwāmī, and the Ayyūbid governor of Diyār Bakr, al-Malik al-Ashraf, who had a panegyric poem dispatched to him in Egypt. In addition, he praised Sunni scholars such as Muḥib al-Dīn al-Wāṣiṭī al-Shāfiʿī and Abū al-Baqāʾ al-ʿUkburī (d.616/1219), in addition to Shīʿite scholars and figures such as al-Naqīb Tāj al-Dīn Yaḥyā ibn al-Naqīb al-ʿAlawī al-Ḥusainī. Al-ʿAmmārī notes that Ibn al-Muqarrab usually ended his panegyrics to the rulers with requests for money.[498]

[497] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.3, 216-220.
[498] Faḍl Al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya*, 172.

Narrative poetry forms the most important part of Ibn al-Muqarrab's corpus. Occasionally, this genre mixes and indeed overlaps with poems on the theme of pride, in which the poet presents a great deal of unique historical information on the ʿUyūnid emirate, such as major events , military and political victories and the names of emirs, battles, generals, tribes and their chiefs. These poems also describe the political, economic and social life of ʿUyūnid Baḥrayn. Considerable geographical information is also preserved in his poetry. This genre was the main source for the history of the ʿUyūnid emirate, as discussed earlier.

Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry on the theme of pride has been compared in style to the works of Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī. Both, during their imprisonments, although for different reasons, addressed poems to the emirs and played upon the themes of Arab pride, nobility and dignity, asking them for release.[499]

Ibn al-Muqarrab's satirical poetry was composed against certain officials, tribes, particularly the ʿUqaylids, and even some ʿUyūnid emirs. For example, he harshly satirised Ibn al-Dabīthī, the tax collector of the town of Wāsiṭ, who taxed him for the iron that he was dispatching from Baghdād to Baḥrayn for trade and construction purposes.[500] Other satirical verses were composed against Badr al-Dīn LuʾLuʾ, who asked Ibn al-Muqarrab to do so for his pleasure.[501]

The poet also employed the genre of elegy. Perhaps the most important examples are *al-hamziyya* and *al-ʿayniyya* for *ahl al-bayt* and al-Imām al-Ḥusain, in which Ibn al-Muqarrab's Shīʿite tendencies are manifested.[502] He also mourned his friends, such as the *qāḍī* Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mastūrī, a judge from al-Qaṭīf or Uwāl, as al-Janbī speculates.[503]

Al-ʿAmmārī concludes that Ibn al-Muqarrab attempted to approach poetry similarly to Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī (915–965 CE), but never reached the heights of al-Mutanabbī's

[499] Fahad ibn Wuraida, 'Ibn Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh' (Masters Diss., al-Azhar University, 1973), 43.
[500] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 402-408, 457, vol.2, 910-914.
[501] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.2, 909.
[502] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 40, n.113-114, 516-525. The *al-Hamziyya* poem is not written in full in the *dīwān*. The commentator writes the first verse of the poet and describes it as a *Ghadīriyya* (about Ghadīr Khumm) and on the family of the Prophet. He then writes that it is not its suitable place to write it in full. Al-Janbī comments that the Baḥraynī commentator may have removed the complete poem owing to his fear of the Sunni Salghūrid rulers.
[503] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.1, 511-515.

imagination and creativity. Al-ʿAmmārī also criticised Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry for lacking attractiveness and effervescence. He remarks that the Bedouin myths, especially those of the tribe of Bakr ibn Wāʾil were an important source for Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry.[504]

5. Poets with Baḥraynī *Nisab/Nisbas* in Iraq and the Poets who Visited Baḥrayn.

Nisbas of countries (attributes or onomastics) were widely used by people in Islamic culture. Those who did not attribute themselves to a tribe used the name of their country of origin or residence, especially when they moved from one country to another. These *nisbas* were initially given to or adopted by recent immigrants. When the *nisba* was adopted by or bestowed upon the new arrival to a country or city, his offspring could hold the same *nisba* for generations. Therefore, when we read, for example, of a *nisba* of al-Miṣrī living in Baghdād, this does not necessarily mean that the individual in question was born in Miṣr (Egypt) and had recently arrived in Baghdād; instead, it might be that one of his ancestors had come from Egypt. The indigenous people of Egypt, for example, did not call themselves 'al-Miṣrī', but referred to themselves by other attributions of tribe or profession. Therefore, the *nisba* is not on its own sufficient evidence to indicate an individual's current place of origin.

Biographers, in order to document a person's movement from one country to another, tend to provide double or triple *nisbas*/*nisab* of countries, sometimes separated by the word *thumma* (then). An example of a scholar who held triple *nisba* is, according to Ibn al-ʿAdīm: 'Sālim ibn Isḥāq ibn al-Ḥusain al-Bazzāz al-Maʿarrī, then al-Dimashqī, then al-Baghdādī. He was from Maʿarrat al-Nuʿmān, who then lived in Damascus and then in Baghdād, and therefore he was attributed to all of them respectively.'[505]

There are three poets mentioned in contemporary sources who possessed the *nisba* of al-Qaṭīfi, and one who is reported to have visited Baḥrayn. The first poet belonging to the period under study was Abū Aḥmad ibn Manṣūr ibn ʿAlī al-Qaṭṭān al-Qaṭīfī al-Baghdādī (d.1087 CE). His biographers report that he came to Baghdād and delivered his panegyrics to its rulers. He

[504] Faḍl al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya*, 170-172.
[505] Kamāl al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d), vol.9, 4101.

resided there until his death and was buried in the cemetery of Quraysh. He composed a poem on al-Ḥusain, expressing in a verse that he was not about to change his doctrine and, at the same time, that he did not believe in Rāfiḍism.[506] This might indicate his moderate Shīʿism, which did not include hatred of and insults towards the Prophet's companions. ʿAdnān al-ʿAwwāmī advocates that he was indeed from al-Qaṭīf, because the biographers wrote that 'he came to Baghdād', suggesting that he was born elsewhere.[507] Although this alone is not sufficient as evidence, it could be added that since Abū Aḥmad had double *nisba*, al-Qaṭīfī al-Baghdādī, he may have been from al-Qaṭīf originally, acquiring the second *nisba* of al-Baghdādī when he arrived in Baghdād and took it as his residence. This remains a possibility, but this conclusion cannot be drawn with certainty unless new informative material is found.

The second poet is Abū al-Faḍaʾil Zākī ibn Kāmil ibn ʿAlī al-Qaṭīfī al-Hītī (d.1151/2 CE). His nicknames were *asīr al-hawā* (the captive of love) and *qatīl al-rīm* (the slain of al-Rīm); al-Rīm being perhaps his beloved. Yāqūt (d.1229 CE), in his *Muʿjam al-ʾudabāʾ*, provided some of his verses and praised them, but did not say anything regarding his place of birth or death.[508] Later biographers, such as Ibn al-ʿAdīm (d.1262 CE) and al-Ṣafadī (d.1363 CE), give him the *nisba* of al-Qaṭīʿī (instead of al-Qaṭīfī) and provide a different name for his grandfather, al-Muslim. Ibn al-ʿAdīm writes that Zākī was a native of the town of Hīt, who later travelled to Mosul, Aleppo and Damascus.[509] ʿAdnān al-ʿAwwāmī suggests that the *nisba* of al-Qaṭīfī is the correct one because Yāqūt was earlier than the other biographers.[510] Nonetheless, even if the *nisba* of al-Qaṭīfī was accurate, there is no indication of Baḥrayn or al-Qaṭīf as a place of birth, residence or death and he may have inherited the *nisba* from ancestors who had immigrated from al-Qaṭīf, perhaps to the town of Hīt in Iraq.

The third poet was Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-Raḥbī (d.1155 CE). He was mentioned in al-Iṣbahānī's *kharīdat al-qaṣr*. The mediator between the poet and al-Iṣbahānī, ʿAlī al-ʿAbdī, informed al-Iṣbahānī that the poet had recited some of his poems to him in Baḥrayn before

[506] Rāfiḍism roughly means the rejection of the legitimacy of the Prophet's companion based on preference of ʿAlī and his offspring from Fāṭima.
[507] ʿAdnān al-ʿAwwāmī, 'al-Ḥiss al-Wiḥdawī fī Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya' *Majallat al-Wāḥa* 5 (2002):132.
[508] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-ʾUdabāʾ*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islamī, 1993), vol.3, 1314-1315.
[509] Kamāl al-Dīn ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab*, vol. 8, 3728-9.
[510] ʿAdnān al-ʿAwwāmī, 'al-Ḥiss al-Wiḥdawī', 119-120.

returning to al-Baṣra; the poet then left for elsewhere and died in 1155 CE. Judging from this phrase we might assume that the poet was living in al-Baṣra originally, but journeyed to Baḥrayn for a while before returning again to al-Baṣra. He may have been one of the ʿAbd al-Qays community of al-Baṣra, which had formed one fifth of its population in early Islam.[511]

The poet composed a panegyric for the emir al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī. It spoke of a female beloved called Hind, and its eight verses reveal a high level of poetic ability. The poet also satirised a group of people in Uwāl called Banū Bashār, of which only two verses were recorded. No information regarding this group has survived, and there is a possibility that the editor misread their name from the manuscript.[512]

6. Poets of the ʿUqaylid Emirate: Kalbī ibn Mājid al-ʿĀmirī al-ʿUqaylī and Hilāl ibn Abī al-Ḥusain al-ʿĀmirī al-ʿUqaylī.

Poetry was practiced and appreciated among Bedouins in general, and the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn were no different. Although information on the ʿUqaylids is extremely scarce, brief details exist regarding ʿUqaylid poets. From Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, who relies on Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī's *dhahabiyyat al-ʿaṣr*, we are informed of the poet Kalbī ibn Mājid al-ʿĀmirī al-ʿUqaylī. He met the historian Ibn Faḍlallāh in 1332 CE and recited some of his poems, of which we only have two verses. They concern a woman named Sulayma; perhaps she was his beloved. He was described as one of Baḥrayn's emirs and merchants, who used to attend the Mamlūk Sultans bearing plenty of noble horses.[513] His name was mentioned in Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh's book *Tathqīf al-taʿrīf* as one of the emirs of the ʿUqaylids, who had a diplomatic relationship with the Mamlūk establishment.[514]

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[511] Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAlī, *al-Tanẓīmāt al-Ijtimāʿiyya wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyya fiʾl-Baṣra fiʾl-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijrī* (Beirut: Dār al-Talīʿa, 1953), 49-50.
[512] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-Shām*, vol.2, 243-245.
[513] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāmina fī Aʿyān al-Miʾa al-Thāmina*, vol.4, 314; Ṣulṭān Saʿd al-Qaḥṭānī, 'al-Shiʿr fī Sharq al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya: Dirāsa fiʾl-Ḥaraka al-Shiʿriyya min baʿd al-Dawla al-ʿUyūniyya ilā Nihāyat al-Qarn 12 AH – 19 CE' in ed. Aḥmad Qaddūr, *Dawrat ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī: Abḥāth al-Nadwa wa-Waqāʾiʿihā*, 325-327.
[514] See Chapter Four.

Another ʿUqaylid poet was Hilāl ibn Abī al-Ḥusain al-ʿĀmirī al-ʿUqaylī, who also met with Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī and recited his poems as quoted Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī. Only a few of his verses were recorded, in which appears the name of his beloved, Umm Salīm. Like his cousin, he dealt in the business of exporting Arabian horses to the Mamlūk Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn.[515] He and his cousin may have been caravan leaders.

7. The Relationship between the Baḥraynī Poets and the ʿUyūnid Emirs.

As we have seen above, the scarcity of information concerning the men of letters and poets prevents us from understanding with certainty the nature of the relationship which existed between these poets and men of letters and the ʿUyūnid emirs. However, drawing on these tiny fragments we can highlight part of the seemingly complicated relationship. A number of phenomena existed in common between these Baḥraynī poets and men of letters, namely imprisonment, confiscation and migration from the region. Al-Ḥusain ibn Thābit, al-Muqarrab ibn Ḍabbār al-ʿUyūnī and his son ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab were jailed and confiscated. The poets al-ʿAbdī, al-Irbilī and Ibn al-Muqarrab emigrated from the country and were subsequently critical of it: Al-ʿAbdī criticised al-Qaṭīf in his poetry after he left it for Iraq, while Ibn al-Muqarrab expressed disappointment in the emirs as a result of their unwise policies, in the advisors of the emirs whom he accused of being disloyal to the emirate and in the Bedouins whom he saw as occupying and ruling the country in reality. However other poets, such as Muʾammal – to judge from the only piece of information we have regarding him – maintained a friendly relationship with the emir al-Ḥasan.

Iraqi poets, in contrast, were warmly welcomed by the ʿUyūnid emirs who established a court and were generous to such Iraqi panegyrists as al-Taghlibī, who panegyrised the emirs Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl and then ʿAzīz ibn al-Faḍl;[516] ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Tamīmī al-ʿAnbarī (d.1128 CE), and Ḥusām al-Dawla Muḥammad ibn al-Mughīth al-Ḥanafī

[515] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, vol.6, 171-172.
[516] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1002-1003.

who also panegyrised the emir Abū Sinān Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl.[517] Of course, these panegyrists did not criticise the emirs, as some Baḥraynī poets probably have done. The Iraqi panegyrists were well received, possibly for their contribution in enhancing the prestige of the emirs in the eyes of their people and perhaps the outside world.

Perhaps the double standard evident in the different treatment meted to foreign and local poets may be explained by the ʿUyūnids' discouragement of intellectual activities in Baḥrayn, because their rule was fragile and they were in constant conflict with the Bedouins. Therefore, the emirs probably could not risk the establishment of a rival power represented by local influential poets, writers, and scholars of religion. This discouragement of scholarly activities in turn kept Baḥrayn as a region of minor importance in learning and scholarship, and probably accounts for the frequent emigration of poets from the region to Iraq and other core power areas. This phenomenon shows the cultural and intellectual dimension of Baḥrayn's peripherality.

8. Conclusion.

The literary tradition in Baḥrayn was recorded by contemporary sources, such as the collection of poems by ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab and its commentary, al-Iṣbahānī's *Kharīdat al-qaṣr wa-jarīdat al-ʿaṣr* and its supplement. They present information about a number of Baḥraynī men of letters and poets, as well as information about Iraqi poets who visited the ʿUyūnid court. Ibn al-Muqarrab has received the lion's share of discussion.

By analysing the little information we have concerning the poets of Baḥrayn and the visiting poets of Iraq, it appears that the ʿUyūnid emirs held an antagonistic position toward the local poets and men of letters of their polity. Some of the few Baḥraynī poets of which we are aware were imprisoned and several fled the region. In contrast, the emirs received in their courts a number of poets from Iraq who were greeted with a warm welcome and great generosity. A possible explanation for this apparent contradiction might be the constant rivalry that existed between the emirs and the Bedouins: the political environment was not suited to encouraging and

[517] Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAbdulqādir ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), vol.19, 7-9; ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: Dār al-Ḥuriyya li-ʾl-Tibāʿa, 1973), vol.2, section 4, 708.

sponsoring scholarly activities such as poetry and religion, which may have constituted an additional political rival to their unstable rule. This may explain why local Baḥyranī poets were imprisoned and Iraqi panegyrists were welcomed. Accordingly, Baḥrayn appears to have produced little literature and was an unaccommodating region for scholarship. Thus, it remained intellectually and culturally peripheral and marginal in the Near East.

Chapter Seven:

Religious Sects in the Region of Baḥrayn *c*.1050–*c*.1400

1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the religious sects that existed in the region of Baḥrayn during the rule of the ʿUyūnids, ʿUqaylids, Salghūrids, Mongols, Ṭībids and Hormuzians in the period *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE. Our sources for this theme are both written and archaeological. They provide two perspectives: the written sources reveal more about the ordinary people's beliefs and practices, whereas archaeological evidence provides further information regarding rulers and the officials' religious affiliations.

As an evaluation of the written sources represented by travel books and geographical encyclopaedias, it may be observed that travellers, such as al-Idrīsī (d.1166 CE), Yāqūt (d.1229 CE), Ibn Mujāwir (d.1291 CE), and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d.1377 CE) avoided reporting about the rulers/administrators of Baḥrayn. Instead, they focused on the ordinary people whom they unanimously described as Shīʿites, but giving them different labels such as *bilād al-Qarāmiṭa* (al-Idrīsī), *rawāfiḍ sabbāʾiyyūn* (Yāqūt), *Imāmiyya* (Ibn Mujāwir), and *rāfiḍiyya ghulāt* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa).[518] The first problem here is that it is uncertain whether these travellers, with the exception of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who visited al-Qaṭīf and provided a specific description of a Shīʿī form of an *adhān*, ever personally visited Baḥrayn and detailed what they had observed. Al-Idrīsī made a geographical error in his description of al-Aḥsāʾ when he wrote that it was off the Gulf; because it was an inland city. Yāqūt did not visit Baḥrayn, but rather the island of Kīsh and Oman, from which he probably derived his information regarding Baḥrayn. Ibn Mujāwir provided an exaggerated number of villages for the tiny island of Uwāl, claiming there to have been 360 in total.

[518] Al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-Mushtāq*, vol.1, 386; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.4, 150; Yūsuf ibn Mujāwir, *Tārīkh al-Mustabṣir*, ed. M. De Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1951-1954), 301; Ibn Baṭṭūṭa *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓar*, vol.1, 210 . The term '*rāfiḍa/rawāfiḍ/rāfiḍiyya*' is used by Sunnis to describe the Shīʿites who consider Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān as illegitimate caliphs. See W. Montgomery Watt, 'The Rāfiḍites: 'A Preliminary Study' *Oriens* 16 (1963): 110-121; Etan Kohlberg, 'The Term "Rāfiḍa" in Imāmī Shīʿī Usage' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99, 4 (1979): 677-679.

The second problem with these sources relates to the conventional perception that this region was inhabited solely by the Qarāmiṭa. This stereotypical image persisted in the writings of historians and biographers until the fifteenth century, although the Qarāmiṭa had collapsed in the mid-eleventh century.[519] For example, in the thirteenth century, Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī wrote that Uwāl was inhabited by remnants of the Qarāmiṭa. In the late fifteenth century, Muḥammad al-Ḥimyarī (1495 CE) quoted al-Idrīsī (d.1166 CE) verbatim without updating his information, and described al-Aḥsāʾ and Uwāl as the countries of the Qarāmiṭa.[520] It is therefore vital to exercise care when dealing with historians' reports and not to accept them unquestioningly. Nevertheless, I do not reject the extant reports given by travellers, and I believe that we should accept that during the period from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, Shīʿism prevailed in Baḥrayn in many forms: Ismāʿīlism, Qarmaṭism, which declined in the early twelfth century, when Twelverism and popular or folkloric Shīʿism began to prevail. Sunnism seems to have been represented largely by the ruling elite with a few people in the oases. It appeared with the Zajjājids in 1050s CE and then with the Shāfiʿī Salghūrids in 1230s CE.

The discussion on Sunnism in Baḥrayn will be based on archaeological evidence and contemporary written sources, such as *Mirʾāt al-zamān, Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* and fatwās of Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328 CE). The contextualisation of the history of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf which were ruled successively by Sunni Shāfiʿī polities, such as the Salghūrids and the Hormuzians for over a century and a half, elaborates on this subject. In fact, the subject of Sunnism in Baḥrayn has received little discussion in recent studies.

A heated and indeed polemical debate remains in progress between a number of recent historians of the ʿUyūnid emirate and the commentators and editors of the *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*; it concerns the religious affiliation of the poet Ibn al-Muqarrab, and extends to the theme of religion in eastern Arabia and Uwāl. This debate has been enhanced by recent political developments in the Gulf, such as the Iranian revolution of 1979 and its implications, the

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[519] Ibn al-Muqarrab celebrates the defeat of the Qarāmiṭa whom he accused of being unreligious and heretics. See Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 939-943. Verses of his poem read:
سل القرامط من شظى جماجمهم فلقا وغادرهم بعد العلا خدما
وأبطلوا الصلوات الخمس وانتهكوا شهر الصيام ونصوا منهم صنما
وما بنوا لله مسجدا نعرفه بل كل ما أدركوه قائما هدما
حتى حمينا على الإسلام وانتدبت منا فوارس نجلوا الكرب والظلما

[520] Muḥammad al-Ḥimyarī, *al-Rawḍ al-Miʿṭār fī khabar al-Aqṭār*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Muʾasasat Nāṣir li-ʾl-Thaqāfa, 1980), vol.1, 14 .

question of the Shīʿites of the eastern province of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and sectarianism between Sunnis and Shīʿites of the Arabian Gulf States. Therefore, a contest to rewrite the doctrinal past of the region has been noticeable in many fields, such as academic and non-academic books and articles, newspaper articles, conferences, internet forums, social media networks, and TV and radio programmes.

Some recent historians of the Gulf, who present themselves as Sunnis, argue that Twelver Shīʿism does not possess a long history in the region. They contend that this doctrine became widespread only during the Safavid period (1602-1717 CE), and more recently with the immigration and naturalisation of Iranian, Ahwāzi and Iraqi Shīʿites.[521] In contrast, an opposing group of historians, who present themselves as Shīʿites, maintain that the origins of the Baḥraynī people as partisans of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalib date back to the life of the Prophet. They hold that the Prophet dispatched to Baḥrayn governors who were friends of ʿAlī, and maintain that the Sunni population began to increase only following the establishment of the Sunni Mālikī Jabrid emirate in the mid-fifteenth century, whose rulers came from al-Ḥijāz and Najd.[522]

In fact, both parties have dealt with this sensitive question in a blinkered manner, deliberately neglecting many indications of coexistence between many sects on different levels of class, for the potential purpose of supporting their current political agenda with an argument based on historical precedence. The following will attempt to discuss the sects that coexisted in the region.

2. Ismāʿīlism/Qarmaṭism.

Ismāʿīlism, or a branch of it, was brought to the region by a group of missionaries, *duʿāt*, such as Abū Zakariyya Ṭamāmī, Ḥamdān Qurmuṭ and Abū Saʿīd al-Jannābī, who established the Qarmāṭian polity in 899 CE. Their dogma was not in complete harmony with the central

[521] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Baddāḥ, *al-Tashayyuʿ fiʾl-Baḥrayn: Tārīkhuh, Ahdāfuh* (n.p, n.p, 2011), 43-86; Ḥasan al-Shaykhī, ʻAkādhīb Shīʿat al-Baḥrayn' *Blogspot* (blog) May 2, 2011, http://alshiakhi.blogspot.co.uk/2011/05/1.html; Hasan al-Shaikhī, ʻAkādhīb Shīʿat al-Baḥrayn - 2 Ukdhūbat al-Ghālibiyya' *Blogspot* (blog), May 2, 2011, http://alshiakhi.blogspot.co.uk/2011/05/2.html

[522] ʿAlī al-Bilādī, *Anwār al-Badrayn fī Tarājim ʿUlamāʾ al-Qaṭīf wa-l-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Baḥrayn*, 20-39; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 205; On the Jabrids see G. Rentz, 'Djabrids' in *EI*^{2}; ʿAbdullaṭīf al-Ḥumaydān, 'al-Tārīkh al-Siyāsī li-Imārat al-Jubūr fī Najd wa-Sharq Shibh al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya', *Majallat Kuliyyat al-Ādāb Jāmiʿat al-Baṣra* 16 (1980): 31-109.

authority of the Ismāʿīlīs and later the Fāṭimid Caliphate, perhaps as a result of their troubled and sometimes antagonistic political relationship.[523] Little is known about Qarmaṭism as a belief, because most of the information on it is derived from their unfriendly heresiographers and polemicists. According to Farhad Daftary, the Qarāmiṭa believed in seven Imāms, beginning with ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib and ending with the last Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl, whom they expected to return as a *mahdī* and a new messenger. This new messenger would end the era of Islam and proclaim the hidden truth of former religions. However, when the Ismāʿīlī leader ʿAbdullāh or (or ʿUbaydullāh) declared himself a *mahdī* (messiah) instead of Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl in 899 CE, the Qarāmiṭa, including those in Baḥrayn, revolted against his authority and separated politically and religiously.[524]

In 931 CE, Abū Ṭāhir al-Jannābī announced that a Persian from Iṣfahān who had come to al-Aḥsāʾ was the awaited messiah *mahdī*. He transferred political power to al-Iṣfahānī, who declared that the era of Islam as a religious authority and belief had come to an end, and that a new era had begun. The new *mahdī* of al-Aḥsāʾ is said to have initiated antinomian religious practices and ceremonies. For example, he ordered the cursing of the Prophet Muḥammad and all other Prophets, the burning of religious books and the worship of fire. Abū Ṭāhir was disappointed and after eighty days eventually killed the alleged *mahdī*, whom he acknowledged to have been an impostor. The Qarāmiṭa then returned to their former beliefs and acknowledged the hidden *mahdī* (Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl). Abū Ṭāhir al-Jannābī acted as the representative of the hidden Imām and later perhaps as the *mahdī*. He promised his people that he would return after his death.[525]

By the time of Nāṣir Khusraw's visit to the besieged town of al-Aḥsāʾ under the Qarāmiṭa in 1051 CE, religious practice was not one of the Qarāmiṭa's preoccupations. Khusraw, who himself was an Ismāʿīlī, reported that praying and fasting were banned. He stated that the people of al-Aḥsāʾ were taught to say that they followed the doctrine of Abū Saʿīd, and that they

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[523] See Bernard Lewis, *The Origins of Ismā'īlism: A Study of the Historical Background of the Fāṭimid Caliphate* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & sons, ltd, 1940), 76-89.
[524] Farhad Daftary, 'Carmatians', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.
[525] Farhad Daftary, *The Ismaʿilis: Their History and Doctrines*, second edition, 150, 161-162; Istvan Hajnal, 'The pseudo-Mahdī intermezzo of the Qarāmiṭa in Baḥrayn' in *Proceedings of the Arabic and Islamic Sections of the 35th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS). Part One,* ed. K. Dévényi, T. Iványi (1998): 187-201.

believed that Abū Saʿīd would return as a saviour. He also reported the absence of a mosque and that the Friday prayer was not performed.[526] He did not make any mention of Ismāʿīlism.

This seemingly antinomian religious position may have reflected the attitude of the ruling class, but it did not necessarily encompass all the people of Baḥrayn. At least some of the region's inhabitants were likely to have retained their beliefs in a type of Islam with the basic principles of Qarmaṭism or Ismāʿīlism which had prevailed for about a century and a half until the Baḥraynī revolts in Uwāl, al-Qaṭīf and al-Aḥsāʾ in 1058-1077 CE. Our sources, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* and *Sharḥ dīwān*, inform us that a group of people in Uwāl in *c*.1058 CE rejected the Sunni Abū al-Buhlūl's *khuṭba* to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Qāʾim, and demanded that the *khuṭba* should be made instead to the Fāṭimid Caliph al-Mustanṣir.[527] Therefore, although we cannot expand on this theme due to the lack of available sources, Qarmāṭian or Ismāʿīlī doctrines appear to have persisted into the late Qarmāṭian period and may have continued to exist after that time, as religions or doctrines do not usually fade suddenly and completely, but rather gradually. The Baḥraynī poet al-Sukūnī (alive in 1159 CE) might have been still Qarmaṭī during the early ʿUyūnid emirate as speculated al-Atharī.[528]

3. Twelverism and Popular Twelverism.

The earliest and clearest evidence for the presence of a Twelver community in Uwāl dates from 1124/5 CE. The inscription is a construction text of the minaret of al-Khamīs Mosque in Uwāl, in which the names of the Prophet Muḥammad, Fāṭima and the twelve Imāms are inscribed in order.[529] The twelfth Imām is named by his title *al-ḥujja*. It is also engraved that the minaret was constructed during the reign of Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl in 1124/5 CE, on the orders of an official or perhaps a merchant called Maʿālī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥammād.[530]

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[526] Nāṣir Khusraw, *Safarnāmeh*, 109-110.
[527] Yūsuf Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārikh al-Aʿyān*, vol.19, 187; Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 983.
[528] ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣbahānī, *Takmilat Kharīdat al-Qaṣr wa-Jarīdat al-ʿAṣr: (Qism Shuʿarāʾ al-ʻIrāq)*, ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī (Baghdād: Maṭbaʿat Majmaʿ al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya, 1980), 851-859.
[529] This evidence was discussed in Chapter Four.
[530] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 18-19.

The second piece of archaeological evidence was also obtained from Uwāl. Venetia Porter discovered a number of inscribed seals and amulets in the fortress of Bahrain (*qalʿat al-Baḥrain*) in the 'merchant quarter'. They date from the fourteenth century and carry the names of the twelve Imāms written in reverse in an angular cursive script. She also discovered, in a grave in the ruins of the western corner of the fortress, a clay prayer-stone '*turba*' which features the names of the twelve Imāms. The writing on the prayer-stone reveals it to have originally come from Mashhad.[531] This suggests that either Baḥraynī people journeyed to Mashhad or Ṭūs for the purpose of paying religious visitation (*ziyāra*) to the shrine of al-Imām al-Riḍā (d. 818 CE), or perhaps that natives of Mashhad/Ṭūs immigrated to Uwāl. The artefact may also have been one of the goods which Mashhad exported to Baḥrayn. In fact, some scholarship has suggested that the Atābeg Abū Bakr ibn Saʿd 'had long-standing connections with Transoxiana.'[532] This, perhaps, was the route by which the commodity arrived in Uwāl.

There are a few written reports about Imāmism and Rāfiḍism in the travel books of Ibn Mujāwir, Yāqūt and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa that need discussion as they were used by recent historians as evidence for Twelverism in Baḥrayn. The traveller Ibn Mujāwir described the island of Uwāl, which he named al-Baḥrayn, as comprised of 360 Imāmī villages.[533] Two remarks may be made on his report, concerning the number of the villages and the term Imāmī. Firstly, the figure of 360 villages appears to be exaggerated. Similarly, an earlier source, *Mirʾāt al-zamān*, quotes Muḥammad ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābiʾ, who was in turn informed by a jurist named Abū Ḥafṣ al-Rayḥānī: '[T]he island of Uwāl's area is 13 *Farsakh* which consisted of farms and gardens of different sizes *ḍiyāʿ*, *mazāriʿ*, *nakhl wa-ashjār*. It had 130 villages, one of them, called Tustar, has 130 mosques alone.'[534] This statement is seemingly fictitious and thus inauthentic: firstly, because Tustar is in western Iran, and secondly as this number of mosques in one village is wholly implausible. Regarding the term 'Imāmī' during Ibn Mujāwir's time (the early thirteenth century), this title was not exclusively used to denote Twelvers, but also Ismāʿīlīs and sometimes ʿAbbāsids. For example, Ibn Khaldūn (d.1406 CE) described the Ismāʿīlī Ṣulayḥids of Yemen

[531] Venetia Porter, 'Arabic Inscriptions from Qalʿat al-Bahrain Excavations', 201-207.
[532] James Watt et al. ed., *When Silk was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 135.
[533] Yūsuf ibn Mujāwir, *Tārīkh al-Mustabṣir*, ed. M. De Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1951-1954), 301.
[534] Yūsuf Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān fī Tawārīkh al-Aʿyān*, vol.19, 189.

(eleventh century) of practising *al-daʿwā al-imāmiyya*.[535] He also used the expression as an umbrella term to cover all Shīʿite subsects which believe in the concept of an appointed Imām, excluding Zaydism.[536] The traveller Ibn Jubayr (d.1217 CE) described Baghdād as the stronghold of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and Qurayshid Imāmī propagation *ḥaḍrat al-khilāfa al-ʿAbbāsiyya wa-mathābat al-daʿwā al-Imāmiyya al-Qurashiyya*.[537] Furthermore, the heresiographer ʿAbdulqāhir al-Baghdādī (d.1037 CE) lists fifteen subsects of what he called Imāmiyya, which included Ismāʿīlism and Twelverism in his book *al-farq bayna al-firaq*.[538] This is not to argue that Ibn Mujāwir did not mean the Baḥraynī people were Twelvers, but rather to show that we cannot be certain of what he intended by his description as some recent historians believe.

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's description of the call to prayer (*adhān*) in al-Qaṭīf shows that it was similar to the Shīʿite *adhān*, but with a number of differences. It contains phrases such as '*ʿAlī walī Allāh*' (ʿAlī is the friend of God), '*ḥayya ʿalā khayr al-ʿamal*' (hasten towards the best of action), '*Muḥammad wa-ʿAlī khayr al-bashar wa-man khālafahumā faqad kafar*' (Muḥammad and ʿAlī are the best human beings and whoever disobeyed them will be unbeliever).[539] Regarding the phrase '*ḥayya ʿalā khayr al-ʿamal*', Zaydīs, Ismāʿīlīs and Twelvers recite it in their *adhān*. For example the Ismāʿīlī jurist Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān (d.974 CE), who wrote *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*, instructed to recite it on the basis that the phrase had been recited during the time of the Prophet Muḥammad and Abū Bakr, and at the beginning of the reign of ʿUmar, who altered it for fear it might discourage Muslims from *jihād*.[540] The Twelver jurist Sheikh al-Ṭāʾifa al-Tūsī (d.1067 CE) also prescribed that this phrase be inserted in the *adhān*.[541] Regarding Yāqūt and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's reports of the Baḥraynī's open rejection (*rafḍ*) of the authority and legitimacy of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, both Ismāʿīlism and Twelverism agree on that belief and practice.

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[535] ʿAbdulraḥmān ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, ed. Khalīl Shahāda and Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), vol.4 , 275.

[536] ʿAbdulraḥmān ibn Khaldūn*, al-Muqadima*, ed. ʿAlī ʿAbdulwaḥīd Wāfī (al-Qāhira: Dār Nahḍat Miṣr li-ʾl-Ṭabʿ waʾl-Nashr, n.d), vol.2, 587-598. He says that 'Twelverism' might be described also as Imāmiyya, particularly by later writers.

[537] Muḥammad ibn Jubayr, *Riḥlat Ibn Jubayr* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), 193.

[538] ʿAbdulqāhir al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayna al-Firaq*, ed. Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Khasht (al-Qāhira: Dār Ibn Sīna, n.d), 56.

[539] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār,* vol.1, 210.

[540] Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān al-Maghribī, *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*, ed. Asif Fyzee (al-Qāhira: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1951), vol.1, 172-175.

[541] Sheikh al-Ṭāʾifa al-Tūsī, *al-Mabsūṭ fi Fiqh ʾl-Imāmiyya*, ed. Muḥammad al-Kashfī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, 1992), vol.1, 99.

The Ismāʿīlī *dāʿī* (missionary) Jaʿfar ibn Manṣūr al-Yaman ibn Ḥawshab (d.958 CE), in his book *kitāb al-kashf*, expresses his harsh opinion of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān who, he believes, usurped the Caliphate from ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.[542] Therefore, Yāqūt and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's reports do not clarify which sect of Shīʿism prevailed in al-Qaṭīf.

As Momen states, 'Shīʿī Islam can be said to have three facets in its religious expression: the popular religion of the masses, the mystical religion of the Sufis and the scholarly legalistic religion of the clerical classes (the ulema).'[543] On folk/popular religion in general Hubert Knoblauch states: 'Popular religion includes forms of beliefs, actions, and material objects adapted, transformed, or created by lay people and sometimes seen as survival of more traditional customs.' He also explains that 'the reason for the marginality, and often dismissal of popular religion is that it differs from and presupposes the official religion of religious experts, be they priests, preachers, prophets, or monks. "Official" religion refers to those forms of religion represented by religious experts legitimated by political, economic, cultural, and other societal institutions. Popular religion can be taken to designate the heterodox elements of religious beliefs, actions, and objects, whereas the "official" religion of religious experts and organizations constitutes the orthodox pole of the religious field.'[544]

In the light of this, elements of folk or popular Shīʿism in Baḥrayn appear in our sources. It appears in the additional phrase in al-Qaṭīf's *adhān* ('*Muḥammad wa-ʿAlī khair al-bashar wa-man khālafahuma faqad kafar*') which is not found in any known Shīʿite legal text. It may have been invented locally and endorsed by the populace. This phrase may be an example of the popular or folk dimension of Baḥraynī Shīʿism as a zealous and vocal expression of identity that is not backed by legal traditions

Another element of folk Twelverism appears in the ʿUyūnid inscription that celebrates the construction of the minaret by Abū Sinān (d.1130s CE). This inscription is located beside another inscription that possesss the names of the twelve Imāms including the al-Ḥujja and was made also in Abū Sinān's reign as it reads. In this inscription, the ʿUyūnid emir Abū Sinān

[542] Jaʿfar ibn Manṣūr al-Yaman, *Kitāb al-Kashf*, ed. Mustafa Ghālib (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1984), 115-116.
[543] Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shiʿi Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 184.
[544] Hubert Knoblauch, 'Popular Religion', in *Encyclopedia of Global Religion*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer and Wade Clark Roof (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2012) Accessed 21/4/2015: http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/10.4135/9781412997898.n572.

conferred upon himself the title of *al-qāʾim fī riḍā rabb al-ʿālamīn*. This poses a number of interesting questions: was it allowed for a Twelver to use the title al-Qāʾim, or was this title preserved for the twelfth Imām?[545] Was he claiming to be the messiah to attract local people's support? Was he aware of the doctrinal connotation of the title and chose to inscribe it deliberately, or was the choice of words a coincidence, or was Abū Sinān merely describing himself as the ruler who strives to satisfy the will of God, which is the literal meaning of the sentence? Unfortunately, the lack of available information makes it difficult to answer these questions, but it appears contradictory and puzzling to see two inscriptions both include the name of the emir Abū Sinān and both contain the titles of the twelfth Imām, but one of them was given to the emir. This different tradition from that perceived in Baghdād and Qum, as well as other elements (see Chapter Seven) suggests the popular nature of Baḥraynī Twelverism.

A number of recent Shīʿite historians put forward an argument that Baḥrayn was Twelver ever since Twelverism crystallised, such as al-Oraibi, al-Janbī, and others.[546] Perhaps, the earliest argument claiming that the region of Baḥrayn and its indigenous people were Shīʿite from the early days of Islam may have been made by Nūrallāh Shūshtarī (d.1019/1610 CE) in his book *Kitāb-e mustaṭāb majālis al-muʾminīn*.[547] It was then echoed by ʿAlī al-Bilādī (d.1340/1922 CE), the author of a biographical dictionary of scholars of al-Qaṭīf, al-Aḥsāʾ and Baḥrayn (Uwāl), *Anwār al-badrayn fī tarājim ʿulamāʾ al-Qaṭīf wa-l-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Baḥrayn*, who devoted its introduction to explaining and expanding upon this view.[548] This has led recent Shīʿite historians to accept this argument as an unquestioned fact and to speak of a Twelver Shīʿism as a deeply rooted sect in the region. Al-Janbī and the majority of recent Shīʿite historians appear to be convinced of the Twelver nature of the region to the extent that al-Janbī describes the region of

[545] See Abdulaziz Sachedina, *Islamic Messianism: The Idea of Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), 60-64; Jassim Hussain, *The Occultation of the Twelfth Imam (A Historical Background)* (London: The Muḥammadi Trust, 1982)

[546] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Shīʿī Renaissance: A Case Study of the Theosophical School of Bahrain in the 7th/13th Century' (PhD diss., McGill University, 1992), 15-18; Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.3, 205.

[547] Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Nūrallāh Shushtarī, *Kitāb-e Mustaṭāb Majālis al-Muʾminīn* (Tehrān: Kitābfurūshī-e Islāmiyya, 1377[1998]), vol.1, 75.

[548] ʿAlī al-Bilādī, *Anwār al-Badrayn fī Tarājim ʿUlamāʾ al-Qaṭīf wa-l-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Baḥrayn*, 20-39.

Baḥrayn, the poet and the whole tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays as 'Shīʿites by default' and that Baḥrayn was 'purely Shīʿite'.[549]

In fact, it would seem that the region of Baḥrayn was never a home for a single doctrine. Rather, it experienced many doctrinal shifts. In early Islam, it was home to the Khārijī sect of al-Najdāt during the Umayyad period, and then a home for the Ismāʿīlī and Qurmuṭī doctrines. Subsequently, Uwāl was ruled by the Ḥanafī Sunnis of Āl Zajjāj. Later still, Baḥrayn was ruled first by the Shīʿite ʿUyūnids and then by Sunni Shāfiʿī Salghūrids and Hormuzians for nearly two and a half centuries. Therefore, the argument that the entire people of Baḥrayn resisted these powerful political entities and maintained their Shīʿism in its Twelver form without being influenced is problematic. Al-Janbī held that the Zajjājid emir, Abū al-Buhlūl, who declared his Sunni Ḥanafī doctrine in a letter that he sent to the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate in approximately 1064 CE, was a Shīʿite in secret, interpreting Abū al-Buhlūl's declaration of his Sunnism as a deception designed to secure ʿAbbāsid and Seljūq aid and to serve his political ambitions. However, this argument appears to be inadequate, because Abū al-Buhlūl proved that by taking three evident measures. He built a mosque; his brother Abū al-Walīd, who was a sheikh, made the *khuṭba* in the name of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph. They also engaged in debates with the Ismāʿīlī locals of Uwāl, who demanded that they instead make the *khuṭba* to al-Mustanṣir, the Fāṭimid Caliph.[550] Perhaps it may be better to suggest that Abū al-Buhlūl was prompted to convert to Sunnism by his political ambitions, if indeed he was a convert and not a Sunni already.

Although a Twelver community existed in Baḥrayn as archaeological evidence suggests, contemporary sources failed to inform us of any Twelver scholar or even an Ismāʿīli or Sunni scholar in Baḥrayn between the 1050s and 1350s CE. Recent discovery of a copy of a manuscript showed in its margin a text of a correspondence sent to the Safavid scholar ʿAlī al-Karakī (d.1533/4) by local people from Uwāl, asking him about shortening the prayers while they were

[549] Al-Janbī says: وعرفنا من كل ما تقدم، أن شاعرنا علي بن المقرب العيوني شيعي بالأصالة، فهو شيعي لأنه من إقليم البحرين المشهور بالتشيع، وشيعي لأنه من قبيلة عبدالقيس القبيلة المشهورة بالتشيع إلى حد اشتهار أي فرد منها يخالفها في هذا المذهب. Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.3, 205, 199.

[550] Anonymous, *Sharḥ dīwān*, vol.2, 982-996. See the contents and analysis of the letter in Chapter Two.

travelling to different mosques of Uwāl as visitations.[551] This might suggest that the island lacked scholars capable of answering such question.

Furthermore, Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī (d.1772 CE) reported that the first scholar of *ḥadīth* in Uwāl was ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Qadamī who lived in the Safavid period (d.1653 CE).[552] This implies that before al-Qadamī the Baḥraynīs' belief in Twelverism was not based on legalistic traditions *ḥadīths* due to the lack of traditionists. Yet, biographical dictionaries indicate a growing number of Twelver students and scholars around the turn of the sixteenth century onwards.

Later sources list a number of scholars with the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī, but they offer no authentic evidence, such as contemporary sources or *isnāds*, to support a connection with Baḥrayn as a place of birth, residence or death. These scholars are Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad, Ibn al-Sharīf Akmal, Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm, Aḥmad ibn Saʿāda, ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān, Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī, Maytham ibn ʿAlī, Faḍl ibn Jaʿfar and Aḥmad ibn al-Mutawwaj. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there was not a single Twelver scholar or student in the region. Wealthy merchants may have funded their sons to travel to Twelver centres of learning in Iraq, Syria or Iran. Also, we observed in the previous chapter the movement of poets from Baḥrayn to Iraq and vice versa; scholars may have undertaken similar journeys, but we do not possess evidence that the aforementioned scholars (with the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī) were among them. This question will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter.

4. Sunnism.

The earliest information on Sunnism in Baḥrayn in the period under question is to be found in the chronicle, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (d.1257 CE), who quoted Ghars al-Niʿma Muḥammad ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābiʾ (d.1087 CE). Sunnism reappeared on the island of Uwāl in the

[551] The manuscript is from the special collection of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUraybī (d.2000 CE) in Bahrain Husain Muḥammad Husain, 'Qaryat al-Dirāz: Bayna al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-Tārīkhiyya wa-l-Asāṭīr al-Marwiyya', *al-Wasaṭ* (Kingdom of Bahrain), 14 March 2015. Accessed 4 April 2015: http://www.alwasatnews.com/4571/news/read/970877/1.html

[552] Yūsuf al-Dirāzī al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn fiʾl-Ijāzāt wa-Tarājim Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, ed. Muḥammad Ṣādiq Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (al-Manāma: Maktabat Fakhrāwī, 2008), 15-17.

1050s CE with Abū al-Buhlūl, who overthrew the Qarāmiṭa. Its presence was later intensified with the Iranian-based polities that ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf from 1230s CE.

Although Abū al-Buhlūl's revolt against the Qarāmiṭa has already been discussed in a separate chapter, here we will examine its religious aspect. Ghars al-Niʿma and Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī wrote that the people of Uwāl, which was under the rule of the Qarāmiṭa, revolted and appointed Abū al-Buhlūl ʿAzzām [ʿAwwām] ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Zajjāj. His brother al-Walīd made the *khuṭba* to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Qāʾim. Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī wrote briefly about the battle between Abū al-Buhlūl's army and the Qarāmiṭa, but omitted the letter that Abū al-Buhlūl sent to the Caliphate after he had established his emirate. He said: '[Abū al-Buhlūl] appointed his brother Abū al-Walīd and wrote a letter to Baghdād reporting his victory and his situation, addressing Abū Manṣūr ibn Yūsuf.'[553] The latter was a prominent figure in Baghdād: a wealthy philanthropist, close to the Ḥanbalī scholars, who served as advisor to the Caliphs and emirs. It appears that he acted as a mediator between the Uwālī rebels and the chancery of the Caliphate. He died in 1068 CE.[554]

The thirteenth century source *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* perhaps had access to Muḥammad ibn Hilāl's chronicle; it quotes the letter of Abū al-Buhlūl, which provides limited details of his Sunni followers. The anonymous author of *Sharḥ dīwān* wrote that Abū al-Buhlūl was a *ḍāmin* of Uwāl's *kharāj*. He had a brother who is described as a pious man, a follower of the Prophet's instructions (*min al-mutaẓāhirīn bi-l-sunan*) and a *khaṭīb* (orator, or Friday prayer leader), named Abū al-Walīd Muslim. In the letter, Abū al-Buhlūl described his tribe as the one which believed in Islam and supported the rightly-guided Caliphs *al-khulafāʾ al-rāshidūn* and the ʿAbbāsid Caliphs until the appearance of the Qarāmiṭa. He cursed the Qarāmiṭa and accused them of altering their Sunni traditions. He said that [true?] Muslims were persecuted under the unbeliever Qarāmiṭa, but that the people of Uwāl still retained their religion. Abū al-Buhlūl stated then that once he had observed the weakness of the Qarāmiṭa, he resolved to revolt in order to restore allegiance to the ʿAbbāsid caliphate and adherence to the Hāshimid *daʿwā*. He added that his tribe followed Sunnism, specifically the Ḥanafī School (*ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa, madhhab al-imām Abī Ḥanīfa*), and that they had built the only mosque on the island in which

[553] Yūsuf Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān*, vol.19, 187 .
[554] Yūsuf Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-Zamān*, vol.19, 204-206.

the daily prayers were performed, and where the *khuṭba* included the name of al-Qāʾim, the ʿAbbāsid Caliph. At the end of the letter Abū al-Buhlūl declared that he had spoken orally with Sheikh Abū Yaʿlā Ẓāfir ibn ʿAlī al-Raḥbī, who was present in Uwāl and had witnessed their situation.[555] Hence, Sunnism/Ḥanafism existed in Uwāl in the 1050s CE and Abū al-Walīd al-Zajjāj was a Ḥanafī praying leader and a *khaṭīb*.

There is no information on Sunnism during the ʿUyūnid emirate (1077-1236 CE), which had an evident tendency toward Shīʿism as attested by archaeological remains such as their coins and the inscriptions discussed above. However, as Uwāl began to attract the attention of merchants from different regions and of diverse doctrines, a Sunni community of merchants, workers, and pearl divers was likely to have become part of the religious makeup of Uwāl and perhaps other Baḥraynī towns. Even the Ḥanafī community may also have persisted.

Sunni Shāfiʿīsm is likely to have found its way to Baḥrayn too; perhaps beginning under the Salghūrid Atābegs of Fārs who ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf from 1236 CE to 1282 CE and likely to have brought their Shāfiʿī staff and troops.[556] Many cities in Iran were predominantly Shāfiʿīte, such as Shīrāz, Yazd, Tabrīz, Ardabīl, Bishkīn, Iṣfahān, Qazwīn, Abhār, Zanjān, Mizdāqān, Jarbadhaqān, Ahār and Nakhjawān, as reported by Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī (d.1340) CE in the geographical section of his *Nuzhat al-qulūb*.[557] The Atābeg Abū Bakr ibn Saʿd was described as a pious Sunni who acted as patron to a number of scholars and was reported to have built and refurbished mosques, shrines and madrasas in Fārs. The Shāfiʿī judges who served in his polity were numerous, most important among them several chief judges: Ismāʿīl ibn Yaḥyā ibn Tikrūz (*c*.1263-1355 CE),[558] Saʿīd Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Bakr Miṣrī and the famous Shāfiʿī scholar Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad al-Bayḍāwī (d.1292 CE), who wrote many books on Shāfiʿī *fiqh* and the *uṣūl* (principles) *al-fiqh*, Qurʾānic exegesis, and history. Among his works was *Niẓām al-tawārīkh*, a source of information on the

[555] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 988-996.
[556] On the subject of Shāfiʿism and scholarship in Shīrāz see John Limbert, *Shiraz in the Age of Hafez: The Glory of a Medieval Persian City* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 89-119, 123; Muḥammad Musā Hindāwī, *Saʿdī al-Shīrāzī Shāʿir al-Insāniyya: ʿAṣruhu, Ḥayātuhu, Dīwānuhu al-Bustān* (al-Qāhira: Maktabat al-Khanjī, 1951), 136-142.
[557] Ḥamdullāh Muswafī Qazwīnī, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulub*, ed. G. Le Strange (Leiden: E. J. Brill Imprimerie Orientale, 1919), 67, 68, 72, 77, 80, 84, 85, 86, 90, 113.
[558] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya al-Kubrā*, ed. Maḥmud al-Ṭanāḥī and ʿAbdulfattāh al-Ḥilū (al-Qāhira: Faiṣal ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1964), vol.9, 400-403; see a list of scholars in John Limbert, *Shiraz in the Age of Hafez*, 108-111.

Salghūrids.[559] The Atābeg Abū Bakr ibn Saʿd built in Shīrāz the shrine of the Shāfiʿī jurist and ṣūfī, al-Sheikh al-Kabīr Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Khafīf al-Shīrāzī (d.982 CE).[560]

It is plausible that Abū Bakr's reforms and religious patronage extended to the territories under his control, which included Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. Since these cities served as stations on his trade and transit network, judges were needed to solve the disputes that occurred among merchants and the local inhabitants. Fārs may have supplied Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf with Shāfiʿī judges. In addition, the soldiers and officials who actually held Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf for the Atābegate of Fārs may have been followers of the same Sunni school as the Atābeg.

The Sunni community of Baḥrayn appears to have lacked scholars, yet had internal debates regarding legal and dogmatic Sunni questions, such as the Friday prayer and whether non-Muslims would see God in the hereafter. They are reported to have sent delegates and letters to scholars in Iraq and Syria. The prominent Ḥanbalī scholar Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328 CE) in Damascus received a delegation '*wafd*' from Baḥrayn who asked him about matters of religious practices. He sent with them a letter addressing the Sunnis who were living in Baḥraynī villages, who were, as described in the letter, surrounded by non-observant Bedouins. Ibn Taymiyya instructed them to perform the Friday prayer and encouraged them to leave their disputes behind and unite.[561]

The Shāfiʿite scholar Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (1274-1348 CE) in his book, *al-Amṣār dhawāt al-āthār* listed the regions that lacked schlolars of *ḥadīth* during his time and those which never had such scholars. He included Baḥrayn among them.[562]

There is potential archaeological evidence for the presence of Sunnism during the period of Mongol rule in Uwāl: an inscription in the form of a construction text for the second minaret

[559] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya al-Kubrā*, vol.8, 157-158; See Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-Tawārīkh*, 123-125.
[560] See Chapter Four for more details on the Salghūrid rule in Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf.
[561] Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ Fatāwā Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya*, ed. ʿAbdulraḥmān ibn Qāsim (al-Madīna: Mujammaʿ al-Malik Fahad li-Ṭibāʿat al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, 2004), vol.6, 485-506, vol.24, 163-176.
[562] Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *al-Amṣār Dhawāt al-Āthār*, ed. Qāsim Saʿd (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyya, 1986), 226-230.

of al-Khamīs Mosque in Uwāl. The inscription contained the title *muḥyī al-jihād* (the reviver of *jihād*), which is likely to have been used by a Sunni ruler.[563]

An archaeological object related to the kingdom of Hormuz points to the existence of a mosque built at his orders of the king Tahmatan II (d.1377 CE) in al-Qaṭīf. Only the construction text is available.[564] As discussed earlier, the Hormuzian King Tahmatan II succeeded in conquering Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf in the *c*.1335 CE. His successors ruled both until the 1470s CE, when the rule of Uwāl was given to the Sunni Mālikī Jabrids in order to seal an alliance. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa described Tahmatan II as a Sunni who ruled an Ibāḍī majority in Oman.[565] Pedro Teixiera, quoting the historian Tūrān Shāh's book *Shāhnāme*, writes that the king of Hormuz was a Sunni, although there were some Shīʿites on the island of Hormuz.[566] Tiexiera also wrote that the kingdom of Hormuz recruited graduates of the madrasas of Shīrāz to run the polity as viziers and treasurers.[567] Our sources do not mention which Sunni school of jurisprudence prevailed in this kingdom, but it is likely to have been the Shāfiʿī, which was predominant in Fārs. As with the period of Salghūrid rule, Hormuzian control of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf may have reinforced the practice of Shāfiʿism through the presence of a community of ruling elites such as Hormuzian officials, administrators, judges and soldiers, who may have been accompanied by their families. One of these elites is known to us by name and title: the great *Ṣāḥib* Khawāja Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Manṣūr ibn Maḥmūd Kurd Zayd was perhaps the Hormuzian governor of Uwāl in the reign of Tūrān Shāh ibn Tahmatan (1346-1377 CE), who refurbished al-Khamīs Mosque and donated several of his properties as an endowment. He recorded the terms of the endowment in a stone inscription dated to 1374 CE. Among its provisions is an order for the funding of attendees of the Friday prayer and readers of the Qurʾān. It is possible that he was attempting to establish a kind of *madrasa* near to or within the mosque. The political aspect of the inscription has been discussed in the previous chapter.[568] The second governor of al-Qaṭīf appointed by the King Tahmatan II was al-Mukarram Kamāl al-Dawla wa-al-Dīn ʿAbdulraḥīm ibn Ismāʿīl. Both of

[563] See Chapter Five. Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 27.
[564] See Chapter Five.
[565] Ibn Baṭṭūta, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓar*, vol.1, 203.
[566] Pedro Teixiera, *The Travels of Pedro Teixiera*, 168.
[567] Pedro Teixiera, *The Travels of Pedro Teixiera*, 185; Aḥmad Jalāl al-Tadmurī and Ibrahīm Khūrī, *Salṭanat Hormuz al-ʿArabiyya*, 143.
[568] Ludvik Kalus, *Inscriptions Arabes des Iles de Bahrain*, 28-30.

their names were inscribed in the construction text of the mosque located in a cemetery of al-Ḥabāka in al-Qaṭīf.[569]

5. ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab's Religious Beliefs.

There is considerable controversy regarding the religious doctrine of which ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab was an adherent: was he Sunni or Shīʿite? This controversy stems from the fact that Ibn al-Muqarrab did not explicitly state his religious beliefs. In addition, his poetry, which supposedly reflected his beliefs, includes a wide range of contradictory dogmas which cannot be reconciled to reflect a specific religious school of thought. Indeed, he may be claimed to have adhered to either doctrine. Nonetheless, his Shīʿite tendency is more obvious than the alternative, as will be seen.

Among the historians who argued for Ibn al-Muqarrab's adherence to Sunnism were al-ʿImrān, al-Khuḍayrī, al-Khaṭīb and Kazārah. They presented several arguments, the majority of which appear somewhat weak. These include: the absence of information regarding Ibn al-Muqarrab's visitation to the shrines of Najaf and Karbalā (al-ʿImrān and al-Khaṭīb),[570] his good relationship with Sunni scholars (al-ʿImrān, al-Khuḍayrī and al-Khaṭīb),[571] and his praise of Sunni governors and appreciation for their building of Sunni schools (al-Khuḍayrī).[572] These historians also refuted the authenticity of the poem *al-ʿayniyya,* which praises the *ahl al-bayt* in an evidently Shīʿite manner. Their refutation is based on three arguments. Firstly, the poem was apparently included in only one of the extant manuscripts (al-ʿImrān, al-Khuḍayrī).[573] Second, it possesses obvious weaknesses in terms of rhetoric and prosody (al-ʿImrān, al-Khaṭīb).[574] Third, Kazārah pointed to the existence of two different poets with identical first and second names but different *nisbas*: the first was the famous ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī, who died in *c*.

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[569] Maḥmūd al-Hājrī, 'Shāhid Asās Bināʾ Masjid bi-l-Qaṭīf: al-Qaṭīf fiʾl-Qarn al-Thāmin al-Hijrī', *Majallat al-Wāḥa* 18 (2011). Accessed online on 20/1/2015: http://www.alwahamag.com/?act=artc&id=844

[570] ʿImrān ʿImrān, *Ibn Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh* (1414[1993]), 39; Aḥmad Mūsā al-Khaṭīb, 'Al-Shāʿir ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī: Dirāsa Mawḍūʿiyya wa-Fanniyya (2)' *Al-Watheekah* 12/24 (1994): 18-77, 59.

[571] ʿImrān ʿImrān, *Ibn Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh*, 39; ʿAlī al-Khuḍayrī, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh* (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-Risāla, 1981), 94-95; Aḥmad Mūsā al-Khaṭīb, 'Al-Shāʿir ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab', 60.

[572] ʿAlī al-Khuḍayrī, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh*, 95.

[573] ʿImrān ʿImrān, *Ibn Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh*, 39; ʿAlī al-Khuḍayrī, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab: Ḥayātuh wa-Shiʿruh*, 94.

[574] Aḥmad Mūsā al-Khaṭīb, 'Al-Shāʿir ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab', 56-58.

630/1233, and the second was ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-Aḥsāʾī, who died in 1111/1699-1700; they claimed that the latter was the real author of the *al-ʿayniyya* poem. Additionally, Kazārah observed that the early Shīʿite biographers did not include ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab (13th century) as a Shīʿite poet. However after the confusion between the two poets who held the same name occurred by later Shīʿite biographers, they began to number ʿAlī al-ʿUyūnī among the Shīʿite figures, falsly ascribing to him the *al-ʿayniyya* poem which was not created by him.[575]

Al-Janbī and his colleagues attempted to refute most of the arguments presented by the aforementioned historians. For example, regarding the authenticity of the *al-ʿayniyya* poem, they discovered three additional manuscripts which include that particular poem. They also responded to those who spoke of its linguistic weakness by explaining that such commemorative poems were intended to be simple and devoid of difficult words and phrases, in order for laymen to understand and recite them during the *ʿāshūrā'* commemorations. They compared the poem to the work of the Shīʿite poet al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (930-977 CE), the compiler of the famous book *Kitāb nahj al-balāgha*, who composed a poem very similar to al-ʿUyūnī's *al-ʿayniyya*. Concerning the cordial relationship between the poet and Sunni scholars and governors, they explained that friendly relations between different sects and religions was normal, and did not prevent individuals from holding their own views; indeed many well-known Shīʿī poets delivered panegyric poems to Sunni governors and Caliphs.[576]

Al-Janbī does not rely solely on the controversial *al-'ayniyya* poem to argue for Ibn al-Muqarrab's Shīʿism. He presents other examples, such as the existence of a *hamziyya* poem (each verse ends with the letter *alif/hamza*) that was written for the celebration of the Shīʿī feast of *ghadīr Khumm*, the day on which Shīʿites believe that the Prophet Muḥammad designated ʿAlī as his successor.[577]

However, while al-Janbī and his colleagues were right to describe Ibn al-Muqarrab as a Shīʿite, their certainty that he was a Twelver was problematic. There are a number of reasons to

[575] Ṣalāḥ Kazārah, *ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab al-ʿUyūnī*, 10-17.
[576] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 172-207.
[577] Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.3, 205, vol.1, 40. The commentator of the *dīwān* writes that Ibn al-Muqarrab Muqarrab wrote a poem on *ahl albayt* for the day of *ghadīr*, but he did not include it in the *dīwān*, suggesting its placement should be elsewhere. For information on the debate regarding Ghadīr Khumm see Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

reject this claim. First, there is no clear evidence to suggest adherence to this specific school of Shīʿism in Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry or biography. Second, the suggestion that Ibn al-Muqarrab was a Twelver requires evidence of his belief in the Twelfth Imām, the basic tenet which separates Twelvers from Seveners or even Zaydīs, who do not believe in a line of designated Imāms. Third, Twelvers expressed antagonism toward Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, because of their rejection of the concept of the Imāma of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, which is a fundamental pillar in the Twelver doctrine; Ibn al-Muqarrab did not share this position with Twelvers. He recited a panegyric poem to the ʿUyūnid emir ʿAlī ibn Mājid al-ʿUyūnī, likening his justice in al-Aḥsāʾ to that of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and his justice in Yathrib (the old name of Medina).[578] Ibn al-Muqarrab also used the symbol of al-Fārūq ʿUmar's justice when panegyrising the Caliph al-Mustanṣir billlāh al-ʿAbbāsī.[579] These arguments against the description of Ibn al-Muqarrab as a Twelver could also be used for the denial of an Ismāʿīlī affiliation.

Safa Khulusi suggested that Ibn al-Muqarrab was a Zaydī, proposing that the poet had converted to Zaydism in reaction to his persecution at the hands of the Sunni ʿUyūnid emirs. Khulusi developed this argument after he observed Ibn al-Muqarrab's panegyric verses which favourably mention Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, regarding whom the Zaydīs hold no harsh opinion. At the same time, Khulusi read verses that present ʿAlī's superiority and a poem that mourns Imām Ḥusain and is modelled on the style of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d.977 CE).[580] Although Khulusi did not provide evidence from a Zaydī source for his argument, a seventeenth-century Zaydī biographer named Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Abī al-Rijāl (1092/1681) from Yemen mentioned ʿAlī ibn al-Muqarrab in his biographical dictionary, within the entry on Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-ʿUlayf. He was uncertain of Ibn al-Muqarrab's specific school of theology and suggested that the poet may have been a Zaydī because he observed some concepts in his poetry that match Zaydī/Muʿtazilī tenets, such as those of *al-ʿadl* (justice) and *al-tawḥīd* (unity of God), in addition

[578] Ibn al-Muqarrab says in the court of ʿAlī ibn Mājid al-ʿUyūnī in *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 177-178:
وملأتها عدلا وكانت عممت جورا تغور له الدنيا وتخرب
ورفعت عنها المؤذيات وطالما راح البلا في جوها يتصبب
حتي كأنك والمشبّه صادق عمرٌ بها وكأنها هي يثرب

[579] Ibn al-Muqarrab says in the court of al-Mustanṣir billāh al-ʿAbbāsī: Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 182:
فلو رأى عمر الفاروق سيرته لقال هذا رحى الإسلام والقطب

[580] Safa Khulusi, 'A Thirteenth Century Poet from Bahrain' in *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 6 (1976): 92-93.

to the aforementioned *ʿayniyya* poem, which commemorates Imām al-Ḥusain and praises *ahl al-bayt*.[581] However, verses of Ibn al-Muqarrab seem to contradict Zaydī principles as we will see.

Al-ʿAmmārī interpreted several verses of Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry which include Shīʿite symbols and clearly manifest his Shīʿite doctrine. He decoded specific verses that he believed to contain basic principles of Shīʿite theology. I will attempt to expand on his interpretations. The symbols in Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry include the concept of *al-waṣiyya*,[582] which proposes that the Prophet Muḥammad made a bequest to the Muslims that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib would be his successor.[583] Apart from Zaydism, this essential concept is common among the Ismāʿīlīs and the Twelvers. In Twelverism, its tradition exists at least as early as the *ḥadīth* compendium of al-Kulaynī (d. 329/940-1), *al-Uṣūl min al-kāfī*.[584] For Ismāʿīlism, we read this tradition in the book of *daʿāʾim al-Islām* by Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān (d. 363/974).[585] However, Zaydism rejected the notion of a heredity line of Imāms and maintained that the Imāmate/political leadership should preferably be given to the most meritorious person within the family of the Prophet, but at the same time allowing and accepting the Imamate/political leadership of an inferior leader when that occurs. They consider ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib to be the most excellent companion of the Prophet because of his superior attributes, not because the Prophet designated him by *naṣṣ*.[586] Accordingly, in this regard Ibn al-Muqarrab opposed the Zaydī doctrine.

The concept of *safīnat al-najāt* (the ship of salvation) was noticed by al-ʿAmmārī when reading Ibn al-Muqarrab's verse addressing the Caliph al-Nāṣir. The verse states: 'A rightful Caliph, who is a descendant of a family, because of which the Prophet Noah was rescued, and the Prophet Ṣāliḥ was supported by God.'[587] Al-ʿAmmārī interpreted this verse as a reference to a Twelver idea or *ḥadīth* that says that Noah, when he was in the Ark, asked for the intercession

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[581] Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Abī al-Rijāl, 'Maṭlaʿ al-Budūr wa-Majmaʿ al-Buḥūr', Manuscript. From the Library of King Saud University, Manuscripts department. No. 7684, 1/1621 ق 134-138.

[582] Ibn al-Muqarrab says in the court of the emir Muḥammad ibn abī al-Ḥusain: *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.2, 1102.
وهم نصروا بعد النبي وصيّه ولا يستوي نصر لديه ولا خذلان

[583] Heinz Halm, *Shiʿism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 7-8; Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shiʿi Islam*, 11-17.

[584] Muḥammad al-Kulainī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī* (Tehrān: Intishārāt-e ʿIlmiyya Islāmiyya, 1410[1989]), vol.1, 3, 325-236; Momen, *An Introduction to Shiʿi Islam*, 147-179.

[585] Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān al-Maghribī, *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*, vol.1, 17-25.

[586] See. Wilferd Madelung, 'Zaydiyya' in *EI*^{2}; Heinz Halm, *Shiʿism*, 202.

[587] Ibn al-Muqarrab says: Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 234:
خليفة صدق من سلالة معشر نجا بهم نوح وأيد صالح

of the family of the Prophet Muḥammad *tawassul* to save the lives of the people in the Ark and that because of that, they survived. Some Twelver *ḥadīth* books inform that the Prophet Ṣāliḥ was aided by God when he begged for the intercession of *ahl al-bayt*.[588]

Al-ʿAmmārī observed further Shīʿī references in Ibn al-Muqarrab's poetry, including the concept of ʿAlī as the *fatā*, the purity of the Banī Hāshim and God's choosing of them, and the purity and Islamic nature of all of the Prophet Muḥammad's ancestors, represented by attributing the Prophet Ibrāhīm to Tāriḥ, not to Āzar the non-believer, as described in the Qurʾān. Also, Ibn al-Muqarrab's verses eulogising a number of Shīʿite scholars and *nuqabaʾ* possess a distinct Shīʿī tone. Al-ʿAmmārī also highlighted verses that reveal harsh criticism of the Umayyads and portray the ʿAbbāsids as saviours of the Banī Hāshim, who inherited the divine right to rule.[589] Here, we can notice that Ibn al-Muqarrab appears more Hāshimid than ʿAlīd, which contradicts Twelver perceptions.

To conclude, it is not easy to suggest to which Shīʿite sect Ibn al-Muqarrab belonged, as he appeared to hold a mixture of beliefs from the three primary Shīʿī doctrines as well as Hāshimid/ʿAbbāsid concepts, in such a way that no Zaydī, Ismāʿīlī, or Twelver doctrine could reconcile them all simultaneously. Thus, Khulusi's hypothesis that Ibn al-Muqarab was Zaydī and al-Janbī's belief that he was a Twelver are both problematic. He appears to have been a pragmatic poet who composed his works according to the beliefs of those whom he panegyrised.

6. Conclusion.

The region of Baḥrayn *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE was home to multiple sects: Sunnis of the Ḥanafī and Shāfiʿī schools, Shīʿites of the Ismāʿīlī and Qarmaṭī sects in the eleventh century and folk Twelvers which appeard in early twelfth century. The majority of the population in the cities seems to have held folk/popular Shīʿism. This folk or popular Shīʿism was embodied in

[588] Faḍl Al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya*, 176-178; Muḥammad al-Ṣadūq, *Kitāb al-Amālī* (Qum, Muʾasasat al-Biʿtha, 1996), 287-288; Muḥammad al-Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār* (Tehrān: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1388/1968), vol.26, 319-320.

[589] Faḍl al-ʿAmmārī, *Ibn Muqarrab wa-Tārīkh al-Imāra al-ʿUyūniyya,* 173-196. Ibn al-Muqarrab says: Anonymous, *Sharḥ Dīwān*, vol.1, 183-184.

لولاكم يا بني العباس ما انصدعت عصا الخلافة صدعا ليس ينشعب

وعاد ميراثكم من كف غاصبه فيكم وأهل الدعاوى عنكم غيب

sentiments in favour of the *ahl al-bayt*, insults directed at the Prophet's companions, weak understanding of the twelfth hidden Imām's titles and the inclusion in the Shīʿī *adhān* of a phrase that does not match with the prescription of any 'official'/legalistic Shīʿī School. The locals also lacked scholars and appear to have contacted outside scholars, such as al-Karakī (d.1534 CE), the Safavid scholar. They asked him a question about shortening the prayers while they were travelling to various mosques in Uwāl as visitations. It is also reported that the first scholar to specialise in *ḥadīth* appeared very late, in 1653 CE.

Sunni communities existed at least from the 1050s, as attested by the *Sharḥ dīwān*. The emirate of Āl Zajjāj in Uwāl expressed its Ḥanafīsm. The Salghūrid Atābegate, the Mongol vassals and the Kingom of Hormuz, which ruled Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf for more than a century and a half, were influenced by the Shāfiʿī School. These rulers were involved in many religious projects, such as the building of mosques, shrines and madrasas in their territories, some of which have reached Baḥrayn as attest archaeological remains. The ruling elite of these polities, primarily graduates of Shāfiʿī madrasas in Fārs, appear to have constituted the Shāfiʿī community in Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf. Also, the fatwās of Ibn Taymiyyah included a correspondence between him and Baḥraynī villagers who were asking about matters of theology and the performance of Friday Prayer. The phenomenon of sending letters to prominent scholars outside the region by both Sunnis and Shiites locals indicates the region's peripherality and marginalisation.

The issue of the religious doctrine of Ibn al-Muqarrab has proven highly controversial. Ultimately, it is difficult to know to which Shīʿite doctrine he adhered, as he seemed to combine a wide range of Shīʿī and Hāshimid concepts in his poems in such a way that no Zaydī, Ismāʿīlī or Twelver scholar could reconcile them all simultaneously. Therefore, he may have been either a free thinker who was not confined to a specific school of thought or a pragmatic poet who only cared about the beliefs of the person whom he panegyrised.

Chapter Eight:

The Question of Twelver Scholars and Scholarship in the Region of Baḥrayn during the Twelfth, Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the question of Twelver scholars and Twelver scholarship in Baḥrayn during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As discussed in the previous chapter, a form of Twelverism indeed existed in the region from the early twelfth century onward, and there is certainly a possibility that this sect found its way to Baḥrayn by means of the movement of people to and from the area; we have already observed the travels of poets. It is possible; therefore, that Baḥrayn received scholars from afar and sent students abroad for education. There is, however, a need to discover whether or not we can identify these students and scholars in order ro improve our understanding of the question of religion in Baḥrayn.

From 1688 CE until the present day, there has been a consensus among historians that a number of Twelver scholars who held the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī and lived during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were from the region of Baḥrayn. These scholars were: (1) Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Baḥrānī (twelfth century); (2) Ibn al-Sharīf Akmal al-Baḥrānī (twelfth century); (3) Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baḥrānī (d.1208 CE); (4) Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī (d.1270s CE); (5) Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥusain al-Baḥrānī (lived *c*.1270 CE); (6) ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (d.1274 CE); (7) Faḍl ibn Jaʿfar al-Baḥrānī (d.1277 CE); (8) Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī (d. *c*.1282 CE); and (9) Aḥmad ibn al-Mutawwaj al-Baḥrānī (d.1417 CE).

These scholars produced a significant body of work on a variety of fields of knowledge, such as Twelver theology, philosophy, mysticism, jurisprudence and literature. A number of them studied under and taught prominent Twelver Shīʿite scholars, including al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (d.1277 CE), al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī (d.1325 CE) and Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn al-Ḥillī (d.1369). Two were also in touch with the renowned scholar Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d.1274 CE). Some of their works influenced and were quoted by subsequent scholars, such as Ḥaydar al-Āmulī

(d.1385 CE), al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d.1414 CE), Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī (d.1501 CE), Sheikh Bahāʾī (d.1621 CE) and Mullā Ṣadra (d.1636 CE).

However, this chapter will challenge the current consensus on their attribution to Baḥrayn as a place of birth, residence or death and demonstrate that it is not based on solid evidence. The problem of *nisba*, again, in addition to politico-religious factors in the eighteenth-century, seem to have played key roles in the appearance of this conception, which this thesis is inclined to cast doubt on its historical accuracy.

The first biographical piece of information that portray the aforementioned scholars as Baḥraynīs appeared on the island of Uwāl/Bahrain after a period of four to five centuries, during its period of Safavid rule (1602-1717 CE). This was written by Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī (d.1709 CE), a Baḥraynī scholar and student of Safavid 'Sheikh al-Islām' Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (d.1698-9), who wrote a short biographical dictionary of 34 Baḥraynī scholars entitled *Fihrist ʿulamāʾ al-Baḥrayn* in 1688 CE.[590]

A student or a copyist wrote in the introduction to this biographical dictionary that Sulaymān was motivated to write this biographical dictionary of the scholars of Baḥrayn at the request of a Persian who had arrived in Uwāl. The Persian, as Āghā Buzūrg suggests, was Mīrzā ʿAbdullāh Afandī (d.1718 CE), who was a student of Majlisī and held the position of leader of the Friday prayer. Afandī also composed a comprehensive biographical dictionary of Shīʿite scholars entitled *Riyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ wa-ḥiyāḍ al-fuḍalāʾ*. In this book, ʿAbdullāh Afandī cites Sulaymān's work when writing on scholars with the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī.[591] It therefore appears that Sulaymān's biographical dictionary assisted Afandī's project.

Sulaymān's student, the Akhbārī scholar ʿAbdullāh ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Samāhījī (d.1723), took Sulaymān's assumptions further. In his major *ijāza*, issued to his student Nāṣir al-Jārūdī in 1716

[590] Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, ed. Fāḍil al-Zākī al-Baḥrānī (n.p., 2001), 43-74. This will be the standard edition. Another edition is Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist Āl Bābūya wa-ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī (Qum: Maṭbaʿat al-Khayyām, 1983), 68-70.

[591] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 43; ʿAbdullāh Afandī al-Iṣfahānī, *Riyāḍ al-ʿUlamāʾ wa-Ḥiyāḍ al-Fuḍalāʾ*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī (Qum: Maṭbaʿat al-Khayyām, 1401[1982]), vol.3, 114, vol.4, 428. See Afandī's biography in *Zahr al-Riyāḍ fī Tarjamat Ṣāhib al-Riyāḍ* by the editor Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī in the introduction of the aforementioned book 13-24.

CE, al-Samāhījī designated the locations of these scholars' tombs in Uwāl/Bahrain.[592] Neither Sulaymān nor al-Samāhījī relied on earlier authorities for this view; they did not refer to earlier books or present *isnāds* to confirm their assertion regarding the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars', whose deaths had occurred some four or five centuries previously. Ever since Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī made this claim, historians studying the intellectual and religious history of Baḥrayn, or editing the writings of the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars', have subscribed to the idea that these were medieval Baḥraynīs. This assumption must not be accepted so unquestioningly.

This chapter will demonstrate how modern historians, who have all depended on Sulaymān's biographies, have been uncritical of the source. In doing so, it will first critically discuss secondary scholarship on this issue by Juan Cole and Ali al-Oraibi. Second, it will provide the biographies of these scholars by tracking the evolution of their biographical information from early to later sources. Third, it will contextualise the establishment of this claim by Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī within the political, religious and social environment of Uwāl.

The major argument of this chapter is that we possess no first-hand evidence to hold that these twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth-century scholars were Baḥraynīs by birth, residence or place of death as claimed by Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī four-five centuries later. Eight reasons lead to this conclusion. First, the *nisba* is not a sufficient evidence of an individual's immediate place of origin as it could initially have been given to one of the individual's ancestors. Second, no contemporary or early sources mention anything in respect of Baḥrayn as the place of their birth or death, and there is no information on their movement to or from Baḥrayn; one earlier source than Sulaymān's reported that one of the scholars (Maytham) had died in Baghdād, as will be seen below. Third, there is a span of four to five centuries that separates their death from the first appearance of information on their places of birth, residence or death, as well as the supposed location of their tombs. Fourth, Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī did not tell us about their

[592] Muḥammad ʿĪsā Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzāt ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn: Mawsūʿa fī al-Tarājim waʾl-Tārīkh wa-l-Adab* (Āl Mikbās li-ʾl-Ṭibāʿa waʾl-Nashr: 1422 [2001]), 117-220; For analysis of it see Sabine Schmidtke, 'The *Ijāza* from ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ al-Samāhījī to Nāṣir al-Jārūdī al-Qaṭīfī: A Source for the Twelver Shiʿi Scholarly Tradition of Bahrain' in *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honour of Wilferd Madelung*, ed. Farhad Daftary and Josef Meri (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 64-85; For analysis of the al-Samāhījī's thought see Andrew Newman, 'The Nature of the Akhbari/Uusuli Dispute in Late Safavid Iran: Part 1ʿAbdallāh al-Samāhijī's 'Munyat al-Mumārisīn' *BSOAS* 55/1 (1992): 22-51, and its sequel 'The Nature of the Akhbārī/Uṣūlī Dispute in Late Ṣafawid Iran. Part 2: The Conflict Reassessed' *BSOAS* 55/2 (1992): 250-261.

earlier sources for their claim. Fifth, the sixteenth-century scholars of Uwāl had no direct connection, such as *isnād*, with the thirteenth-century 'al-Baḥrānī scholars', if the *isnād* existed, Ḥillī scholars are in the middle of the chain. Sixth, no manuscripts written by the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' have been discovered in the region yet. Seventh, the idea that these highly sophisticated scholars lived in Baḥrayn does not match with the status of Baḥrayn as a peripheral and marginal area; evidence showed that some Baḥraynī people sought fatwas from outside scholars. Eighth, it is reported that the first scholar in Uwāl to specialise in and introduce *ḥadīth*, which is indispensable knowledge for legalistic Twelverism and scholarship, lived in the early seventeenth century and died in 1653 CE during the Safavid rule of Bahrain. All these reasons render it challenging for historians, who are expected to rely on firm evidence, to verify these later reports which appeared in a Safavid context.

2. Discussion of the Hypotheses of Juan Cole and Ali al-Oraibi.

The works of Juan Cole and Ali al-Oraibi are thus far the leading studies on the question of scholarship in the region of Baḥrayn; they truly represent the entire modern literature on the subject, which was written primarily in Arabic.

Juan Cole was perhaps the first Western scholar to attempt to write a history of the religion and scholars of medieval Baḥrayn, in his 1987 article 'Rival Empires of Trade and Imami Shīʿism in Eastern Arabia 1300-1800'.[593] This pioneering research also studied the Safavid rule in Baḥrayn and explained how the Safavids introduced *uṣulī* Twelverism to the island which was a great research indeed. However, regarding his discussion on medieval Baḥrayn, Cole arrived at several conclusions which this thesis suggests were problematic.

A number of factors lay behind this. First, Cole did not question or evaluate the modern Baḥraynī biographical dictionaries he used; rather, he fully accepted their information. Second, he appeared unaware of the political separation that existed between the island of Uwāl, on which all of the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' were held to have been born and buried, and the town of

[593] Juan Cole, 'Rival Empires of Trade and Imami Shiʿism in Eastern Arabia 1300-1800' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19/2 (1987): 177-204. It is republished in Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shiʿite Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 31-57. The thesis uses the second one.

al-Aḥsāʾ. The former was under the rule of Iranian polities, the Salghūrids, Mongol vassals and the Hormuzians, who were Sunni Shāfiʿīs, while al-Aḥsāʾ was governed by the ʿUqaylid emirate, whose sectarian affiliation is unknown. This lack of awareness in this political and administrative separation between Uwāl and al-Aḥsāʾ produced confusion in the construction of his arguments. Third, Cole relied upon the problematic reports of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d.1449 CE) and al-Sakhāwī (d.1497 CE), which speak of a Qarmāṭian polity under a family called the Jarwānids which allegedly ruled in Baḥrayn in the fifteenth century.[594] Fourth, he built his narrative upon the conventional but inaccurate belief that the ʿUyūnids were Sunnis loyal to the Seljūqs, asserting that the people of Baḥrayn had traded their radical and extreme Ismāʿīlī Shīʿism for a more quietist Twelver Shīʿism that the Sunni ʿUyūnids considered less objectionable. In fact, the majority of these scholars were born after the fall of ʿUyūnid rule. Fifth, he interpreted a term used by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *rāfiḍiyya ghulāt*, to refer to Ismāʿīlīs, claiming that this phrase was used by Sunnis to describe Ismāʿīlīs. However, al-Oraibi disagrees with Cole's interpretation of the phrase, and compared Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's usage of this term (*rāfiḍiyya ghulāt*) to other well-known Twelver towns such as Ḥilla, Najaf and Karbalā.[595] As we have already discussed in the previous chapter, these terminologies that describe Shīʿī sects were not well-defined in medieval periods and could be umbrella terms that encompassed many sects which shared common beliefs, but differ in details. Since Ibn Baṭṭūṭa gave a general term and described their extremist views and popular practice, such as the *adhān*, they are likely to have belonged to a folkloric form of Shīʿīsm which had elements of both Twelverism and Ismāʿīlism.

Cole argues that Ismāʿīlism and Twelverism coexisted in Baḥrayn during the fourteenth century due to the similarity in their laws: the Iraqi-educated Baḥraynī Twelver scholars were recruited by the Ismāʿīlī Bedouin Jarwānids to serve in administrative and judicial posts. He stresses that these Bedouins employed Baḥraynī [Uwālī] judges, such as Aḥmad ibn al-Mutawwaj, who was believed to have been from Uwāl.[596] However, although his argument about the coexistence between the two sects is sound, the recruitment of the Jarwānids of judges in Uwāl would have been impossible as the Bedouin Jarwānids were not in control of Uwāl, which had fallen under the rule of Iranian-based polities as described in Chapter Five.

[594] A discussion on these problematic reports is presented in Chapter Five.
[595] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Shīʿī Renaissance: A Case Study of the Theosophical School of Bahrain in the 7th/13th Century' (PhD diss., McGill University, 1992), 22.
[596] Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War*, 31-35.

Ali al-Oraibi wrote a doctoral thesis entitled *Shīʿī Renaissance: A Case Study of the Theosophical School of Bahrain in the 7th/13th century* (1992), in which he argued for the existence of what he called 'the School of Baḥrayn' in Baḥrayn during the thirteenth century.[597] His thesis covered several subjects, including a brief history of the region from the early Islamic period, and the biographies and scholarly contribution of the thirteenth-century scholars who possessed the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī and were considered by him as Baḥraynīs. Al-Oraibi also presented four unedited manuscripts of treatises written by ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (died around 1274 CE) and Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī (d.1282 CE) in the appendix.[598]

Al-Oraibi argued that 'the Imamis of Baḥrayn were not Ismāʿīlī converts, as some scholars suggest, but that they have been Imamis ever since Imamism crystalised,'[599] This problematic perception is common among modern Shīʿite historians, as has been discussed in the previous chapter. Although al-Oraibi acknowledged that these scholars were trained at the school of al-Ḥilla, held teaching positions there and lived most of their life in Iraq, he insisted on creating a separate school and calling it the 'Baḥrayn School'.[600] However, he provided no evidence of their existence in Baḥrayn other than what was reported about their tombs, at a much later date.

Al-Oraibi also argued that what he defines as the 'School of Baḥrayn', and its members Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī, his student ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī and his student Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī, were responsible for introducing philosophy and mysticism into the intellectual structure of Twelver Shīʿism even before Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. He added that their works were quoted by early Shīʿite mystics, such as Ḥaydar al-Āmulī (d.1385 CE), Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī (d.1501 CE) and Mullā Ṣadrā (d.1636 CE).[601] Apart from creating for them a separate school based solely on geography, I agree with this point.[602]

Al-Oraibi also published a work on the same subject entitled 'Rationalism in the School of Bahrain: A Historical Perspective' (2001), in which he demonstrated several points: first, the

[597] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Shīʿī Renaissance: A Case Study of the Theosophical School of Bahrain in the 7th/13th Century' (PhD diss., McGill University, 1992)
[598] I have edited these texts a long with other texts to be published later.
[599] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Shīʿī Renaissance', 15-18. He means Twelvers.
[600] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Shīʿī Renaissance', 24-31.
[601] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 33-34.
[602] The name 'al-Baḥrānīs' School' might be plausible because of their special interest in philosophy and mysticism.

significant influence of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn ʿArabī on 'al-Baḥrānī scholars'; second, their belief in the doctrine of theomonism (*waḥdat al-wujūd*); third, the fact that despite their preoccupation with philosophy, they did not reach the point of constructing a complete philosophical system; fourth, he argued that it was the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' who established a systematic Shiʿī mysticism, and not Ḥaydar al-Āmulī, as most scholars believe. He demonstrated that al-Āmulī himself cited ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān and Maytham ibn ʿAlī to justify and consolidate his concepts.[603]

3. The Biographies of the Alleged Baḥraynī Scholars.

Early information on the alleged Baḥraynī scholars existed in the forms of *ijāzāt* (diplomas), *ḥadīth isnāds* (chains of transmitters), contemporary biographical dictionaries and occasionally in the introductions of the books and treatises written by these scholars, as well as information in the works of their contemporaries. None of these early sources, as we will see below, record that the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' came from Baḥrayn or died in Baḥrayn. It was not until 1688 CE that Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Baḥrānī, in his biographical dictionary, *Fihrist ʿulamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, included a number of Shīʿite scholars whom he thought were Baḥraynīs, or perhaps whom he chose to present as Baḥraynīs based on their *nisba*.

Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmmār al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī reached the highest rank among his fellow scholars of Bahrain (the island) under the Safavids, and was called al-Muḥaqqiq al-Baḥrānī. He was born in 1665 CE, in the village of al-Māḥūz on the isle of Sitra in Uwāl/Bahrain. He traveled to Iran and studied under the famous Safavid scholar Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (d.1699 CE).[604] Sulaymān was a prolific writer who is said to have produced about 300 works. He died in 1709 CE and was buried in the same village.[605]

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[603] Ali al-Oraibi, 'Rationalism in the School of Bahrain: A Historical Perspective', in *Shiʿite Heritage: Essays on Classical and Modern Traditions*, ed. L. Clarke (New York: Global Publications Binghamton University, 2001), 332-333.

[604] Rainer Brunner, 'MAJLESI, Moḥammad-Bāqer', *Encyclopædia Iranica*. Online accessed on 28/2/2015: http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/majlesi-mohammad-baqer

[605] Yūsuf al-Dirāzī al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn*, 9-14.

Sulaymān's student, al-Samāhījī (d.1723 CE), in his major *ijāza*[606] issued to his student Nāṣir al-Jārūdī in 1716 CE, developed upon Sulaymān's information, and provided for the first time the supposed locations of these scholars' tombs in the village of Sitra on Uwāl. There was, therefore, a gap of four to five centuries between the deaths of these scholars and the initial designation of their origins and resting places.

Many of the biographical dictionaries and *ijāzāt* that were produced after Sulaymān al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī and ʿAbdullāh al-Samāhījī have up until recent times repeated their information as unquestioned fact. Among the most important of these dictionaries were: *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn fiʾl-ijāzāt wa-tarājim rijāl al-ḥadīth* by Yūsuf ibn Aḥmad al-Dirāzī al-Baḥrānī (d.1772 CE); *Anwār al-badrayn fī tarājim ʿulamāʾ al-Qaṭīf wa-l-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Baḥrayn* by ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī (d.1922) and *Muntaẓim al-durrayn fī tarājim ʿulamāʾ wa-udabāʾ al-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Qaṭīf wa-l-Baḥrayn* by Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad al-Tājir al-Baḥrānī (d.1967); *Ṭabaqāt aʿlām al-Shīʿa* by Muḥammad Āghā Buzūrg al-Ṭehrānī (d.1970 CE).[607]

These dictionaries do not provide new information on the scholars under question, with the exception of limited attempts to correct several names and dates. The following section of this chapter will present biographical material on these alleged Baḥraynī scholars in an attempt to track the evolvement of their biographies until the conventional wisdom was first presented by Sulaymān. It will also try to fill in missing details, such as their movements from one location to another.

[606] This is a type of certificate which permits its holder to transmit knowledge and to claim connection to the knowledge of his teacher, and his teacher's teachers, in a chain which extends up to the authors of the books and even to the Imāms and the Prophet. This *ijāza* is necessary in order to practise legal posts, to present religious reasoning and to issue *fatāwā*.

[607] Yūsuf ibn Aḥmad al-Dirāzī al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn*, 174, 250, 253; ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn fī Tarājim ʿUlamāʾ al-Qaṭīf wa-l-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Baḥrayn* (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-Aʿlamī, 1994), 56, 57, 58, 60, 66; Muḥammad al-Tājir al-Baḥrānī, *Muntaẓim al-Durrayn fī Tarājim ʿUlamāʾ wa-Udabāʾ al-Aḥsāʾ wa-l-Qaṭīf wa-l-Baḥrayn*, ed. Ḍiyāʾ Āl Sunbul (Beirut: Muʾasasat Ṭayba li-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth, 1430/2009), vol.1, 143, 178, vol.2, 46, vol.3, 141, 247; Muḥammad Āghā Buzūrg al-Ṭehrānī, *Ṭabaqāt Aʿlām al-Shīʿa* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1971), 7, 187-188.

3.1 Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Isḥāq al-Baḥrānī (d.1208) and his Contemporary Qiwām al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad.

The earliest scholars who were described by Sulaymān in 1688 CE as being 'among the old scholars of Baḥrayn' were Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Isḥāq al-Baḥrānī and Qiwām al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad. They both were *ḥadīth* narrators.[608]

Rāshid is mentioned in the book, *al-Arbaʿūn ḥadīth* written by Muḥammad al-ʿĀmilī, known as al-Shahīd al-Awwal (1334-1385 CE). In the *isnād* of the third *ḥadīth*, Rāshid was described as a jurist, linguist and theologian (*mutakallim*). The *isnād* links Rāshid with his teacher, the important Twelver scholar Faḍlallāh ibn ʿAlī al-Rāwandī (d.1176 CE), who narrates upon the authority of Abū al-Ṣamṣām Dhū al-Faqqār al-Ḥasanī and Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, the prominent Twelver scholar who died in 1067 CE. The *isnād* ends with Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d.765 CE), the sixth Imām according to Twelver Shīʿites.[609]

Rāshid and Qiwām al-Dīn both feature in the compilation of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (d.1698/9 CE), *Biḥār al-anwār*, in the chapter on al-Majlisī's *ijāzāt* (diplomas). These *ijāzāt* are formed as chains of transmitters, each of whom is listed as the student of another, until the chain ends with an Imām, a great scholar or the author of a book. Al-Majlisī stated that he occasionally relied upon *ijāzāt* written by some of these medieval scholars. These *ijāzāt* offer information regarding the teachers and students of the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' and sometimes the dates of their death.

In the *ijāzāt* of *Biḥār al-anwār* we read that Qiwām al-Dīn was also a student of the scholar Faḍlallāh ibn ʿAlī al-Rāwandī.[610] Rāshid and Qiwām al-Dīn were teachers of Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Qasīnī, to whom Qiwām al-Dīn issued an *ijāza* in 1192.[611] Rāshid also acquired an *ijāza* of the book of *al-sabʿ fiʾl-qirāʾāt* 'seven readings of the Qurʾān' written by Ibn Mujāhid. Rāshid granted his student Ṣafī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Maʿadd the same *ijāza*.[612]

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[608] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 64-68.
[609] Muḥammad al-ʿĀmilī, *al-Arbaʿūn Ḥadīth*, ed. Madrasat al-Imām al-Mahdī (Qum: n.p., 1407 [1987]), 29.
[610] Muḥammah Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār al-Jāmiʿa li-Durar Akhbār al-Aʾimma al-Aṭhār* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Wafāʾ, 1983), vol. 106, 32.
[611] Muḥammah Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol.106, 18-19.
[612] Muḥammah Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol.104, 129.

Since Rāshid and Qiwām al-Dīn were students of Faḍlallāh al-Rāwandī, they may have been students at his school *al-madrasa al-majdiyya* (al-Majdiyya School), established in Kāshān (in Iran between Qum and Iṣfahān). This school was funded by Majd al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ʿUbaydallāh ibn Faḍl ibn Maḥmūd.[613]

Another piece of information points to a connection with Kāshān. Another of Rāshid's teachers was ʿAlī ibn ʿAbduljabbār ibn ʿAlī al-Ṭūsī. In an *ijāza* written in *Biḥār al-anwār*, it is stated that Rāshid was a student of ʿAlī ibn ʿAbduljabbār al-Ṭūsī, who received an *ijāza* from his father al-Qāḍī ʿAbduljabbār (not to be confused with the Muʿtazilite scholar (d.1025)), on the authority of Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī (sheikh al-Ṭāʾifa) (d.1067 CE). In fact, the father of Rāshid's teacher was Rukn al-Dīn ʿAbduljabbār, who was the *qāḍī* of Kāshān in Iran.[614] Hence, both his teachers Faḍlallāh al-Rāwandī and ʿAlī ibn al-Qāḍī ʿAbduljabbār were living in Kāshān.

A report on Rāshid's movements in Iraq is provided by his contemporary Muntajab al-Dīn ibn Bābūya al-Qummī (d.1189), who wrote: 'Rāshid studied under Iraqi scholars and resided in Iraq for a while.'[615] Perhaps Rāshid travelled from Kāshān to Iraq; we still have no report that points to a connection with Baḥrayn. We know from *Biḥār al-anwār* that Rāshid died in 605/1208, shortly after he taught his student Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Qasīnī, but there is no indication of the place of his death.[616] It is possible that if we possessed detailed information on Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Qasīnī, it might reveal the whereabouts of Rāshid's death.

The first piece of information regarding Rāshid's place of burial in Baḥrayn/Uwāl appeared 508 years after his death in 1208 CE, in the major *ijāza* provided by ʿAbdullāh ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Samāhījī al-Baḥrānī (d.1723 CE) to his student Nāṣir al-Jārūdī in 1716 CE. Al-Samāhījī, without citing a reference or an authority, claims that Rāshid was buried in the shrine of al-Nabīh Ṣāliḥ, which is a small island near Sitra in Uwāl.[617]

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[613] ʿAbduljalīl al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-Naqd*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusainī Armāwī (n.p., 1331[1952]), 168-170, 473; ʿAlī Khān al-Madanī, *al-Darajāt al-Rafīʿa fī Ṭabaqāt al-Shīʿa*, ed. Sayyid Muḥammad Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (Qum: Manshūrāt Maktabat Baṣīratī, 1397[1977]), 506.

[614] Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Amal al-Āmil*, ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Wafāʾ, 1983), vol.2, 143.

[615] Muntajab al-Dīn ibn Bābūya, *Fihrist Asāmī ʿUlamāʾ al-Shīʿa wa-Muṣannafātihim*, ed.ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ṭabṭabāʾī (Qum: Maṭbaʿat Khayyām, 1983/4), 77.

[616] Muḥammah Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol.106, 19. He say:' و ذكر أن الفقيه راشد بن إبراهيم روى لوالده في سنة خمس و ستمائة قبل وفاته بشهور قليلة و أن قوام الدين روى له في سنة ثمان و ثمانين و خمسمائة'

[617] Muḥammah Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzāt ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 182.

Although no early biographers or historians reported any works written by Rāshid, a seemingly very modern manuscript attributed to Rāshid exists in the *markaz iḥyāʾ mīrāth-e islāmī* in Qum. It has recently been edited and published by Muḥammad ʿĪsā Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī in 2002, and is entitled *Mukhtaṣar fī taʿrīf aḥwāl sādāt al-anām al-nabī wa-l-ithnay ʿashar imām*.[618] The editor does not explain how he confirmed the manuscript's authorship.

3.2 Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Saʿīd ibn Saʿāda (died *c.* 1270s CE).

The third scholar to be identified as native of Baḥrayn by Sulaymān, and subsequently by later biographers and historians, is Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Saʿīd ibn Saʿāda.[619] There is no report of his dates of birth or death. However from the only treatise he wrote, on which Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d.1274) is said to have commented, we understand that he died before al-Ṭūsī – who was perhaps also his contemporary. The introduction is said to have been written by Ibn Saʿāda's student ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān.[620] Ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī was also mentioned by Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī (d.1501) in his *ijāza* as one of the scholars in the chain of transmitters, in which nothing is said about the location of his birth, residence or death.[621]

There is also confusion concerning the identity of his teacher. We know from Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī's *ijāza* that Ibn Saʿāda was a student of Najīb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Sūrāwī, who in turn narrated upon the authority of Hibatullāh ibn Ruṭaba al-Sūrāwī. However, Sulaymān later wrote that Ibn Saʿāda was a student of his son Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad al-Sūrāwī, who narrated upon the authority of al-Ḥusain ibn Hibatullāh ibn Ruṭaba, hence lowering Ibn Saʿāda's *ṭabaqa* (generation of scholars). Whatever the correct identity of his sheikh was, whether the father or the son, they possessed the same *nisba* of al-Sūrāwī. However, there is a possibility that even this *nisba* is given inaccurately. Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Faraj al-Sūrāwī was,

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[618] The manuscript is stored in Qum in the Markaz Mīrāth-e Islāmī under 18/71. Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baḥrānī, *Mukhtaṣar fī Taʿrīf Aḥwāl Sādāt al-Anām al-Nabī wa-l-Ithnay ʿAshar Imām*, ed. Muḥammad ʿĪsā Āl Mikbās (n.p., ʿIlmiyya, 1423/2002).

[619] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 45-49.

[620] Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, 'Sharḥ Risālat al-ʿIlm', Manuscript. From Kitāb Khāne-e Majlis Shūrā-e Millī, Tehrān, codex number 36023/1717, 207-225.

[621] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī al-ʿAzīziyya fiʾl-Aḥādīth al-Dīniyya* (Qum: Maṭbaʿat Sayyid al-Shuhadāʾ, 1983-1985), 12.

according to *Riyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ*, a student of al-Ḥusain ibn Hibatullāh ibn Ruṭaba al-Sūrāwī,[622] and Muḥammad ibn Shahrāshūb al-Māzandarānī (d.1192 CE in Aleppo). The latter is said to have held the *nisba* of al-Sarawī.[623] These two *nisbas* al-Sūrāwī and al-Sarawī are quite close morphologically.

Ibn Saʿāda wrote a treatise on epistemological philosophy entitled *Risālat al-ʿilm*.[624] A commentary on this book is said to have been written by al-Ṭūsī, who referred to the author as 'the author of the treatise, *ṣāḥib al-risāla*' without naming him. However, Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī suspected that the commentary was not written by al-Ṭūsī, but rather by Ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī, whose writing style the commentary supposedly resembled.[625] Indeed, the manuscript, a copy of which I possess, includes in the margin the name of Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham ibn ʿAlī ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī as the commentator.[626]

Ibn Saʿāda was suggested by modern biographers to have been a Twelver only because both his teacher and student were Twelvers; otherwise his only written work does not provide any clue regarding his sectarian doctrine. Al-Oraibi, discussing the reason for Ibn Saʿāda's preoccupation with philosophy, suggested that because of the flourishing economy of Baḥrayn, the region's scholars maintained continuous contact with visiting traders from further afield who held various kinds of religious beliefs and doctrinal thoughts. This rich diversity created an intellectual environment which allowed a kind of dialogue; hence, the rational School of Baḥrayn was formed.[627] However, this presumption is based on his belief that Ibn Saʿāda was from Baḥrayn, which lacks evidence.[628]

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[622] ʿAbdullāh Afandī, *Riyāḍ al-ʿUlamāʾ*, vol. 5, 375-376.

[623] Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, ed. ʿUmar Tadmurī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1987), vol.41, 309.

[624] A number of copies of this manuscript exist. The earliest copy of which I know is dated to 1634 CE and was copied anonymously. It is held in the Marʿashī Najafī Library under the call number 12911/3. The second earliest manuscript, dated to 1672 and written by Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Khawāja Aḥmad ibn Khalīl Gīlānī Lahījī, is also stored in the Marʿashī Najafī Library under the call number 7844/3.

[625] Ali al-Oraibi believes the commentary was wrriten by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, not Maytham. See the discussion on this question Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 36-38.

[626] Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, 'Sharḥ Risālat al-ʿIlm', Manuscript. From Kitāb Khāne-e Majlis Shūrā-e Milley, Tehrān, codex number 36023/1717, 207-225.

[627] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shi'i Renaissance*, 31.

[628] In fact, the town of Sūrā in Iraq may be a more likely option for the source of the philosophical tradition which influenced Ibn Saʿāda and his student ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān. First, the town of Sūrā was home to Christian Assyrians, as described by Yāqūt. It was also very close to al-Ḥilla and Baghdād. It might be possible that Ibn Saʿāda was

Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh wrote that he heard a number of older people saying that Ibn Saʿāda's tomb was close to that of his student ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Sitrī al-Baḥrānī's tomb in Sitra.[629] This is a clear confession that Sulaymān was not relying on traditional authorities, namely a book or *isnād*, but rather on popular beliefs for documenting events that occurred many centuries earlier. Al-Samāhījī followed his teacher's lead and added that Ibn Saʿāda's tomb was located in Sitra.[630] This story has been repeated by subsequent biographers and historians until the present time.[631]

3.3 Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥusain ibn Ibrāhīm (Lived c.1270 CE).

This scholar lived in al-Ḥilla and was mentioned by his teacher Jaʿfar ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ḥillī, known as al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (1205-1277 CE) in his *ijāza* to him. Al-Muḥaqqiq wrote at the end of Sheikh al-Ṭāʾifa al-Ṭūsī's book *al-Nihāya*: 'The jurist and scholar Abū al-Ḥusain Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥusain ibn Ibrāhīm has read this book with me in 669/1270.'[632] This manuscript of the book written by al-Muḥaqqiq was seen by Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī, who wrote his testimony in his *fihrist*.[633] Again, we cannot verify that this scholar was actually from Baḥrayn.

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influenced by the Christians in his choice of the subject of epistemological philosophy. This may better explain the existence of a very early philosophical work written by a Twelver scholar. On Sūrā see Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol.3, 278.

[629] Cited in ʿAlī al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn*, 56-57. Sulaymān writes: "وقد سمعت جماعة من المعمرين يقولون أن قبره في قرب الشيخ جمال الدين علي بن سليمان."

[630] Muḥammad Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzāt ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 176.

[631] See footnote 603.

[632] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist Āl Bābūya wa-ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī (Qum: Maṭbaʿat-e Khayyām, 1404[1984]), 84; Sālim al-Nuwaydrī, *Aʿlām al-Thaqāfa al-Islāmiyya fiʾl-Baḥrayn khilāl 12 Qarn* (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-ʿĀrif, 1992), vol.1, 309-10.
Al-Muḥaqqiq al-Hillī wrote: " قرأ عليّ الشيخ الأجل العالم الفقيه الفاضل الدين أبو الحسين إبراهيم بن الحسين بن إبراهيم البحراني كتاب النهاية". He also wrote at the end of the first volume of the book: " أنهاه أيده الله قراءة وبحثا وفهما في مجالس آخرها الاربعاء سابع عشر ربيع الأول سنة تسع وستين وستمائة كتبه جعفر بن سعيد". See Sālim al-Nuwaydrī, *Aʿlam al-Thaqāfa*, vol.1, 309.

[633] Muḥammad al-Tājir al-Baḥrānī, *Muntaẓim al-Durrayn*, vol.1, 24-5.

3.4 Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (Died *c.* 1274 CE) and his Son Ḥusain.

Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī and his son Ḥusain were mentioned by Sulaymān in his *fihrist* as scholars from Baḥrayn.[634] In 723/1323, the Twelver scholar Jamāl ad-Dīn Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf ibn ʿAlī ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (d.1325), known as al-ʿAllāma, wrote an *ijāza* called *al-ijāza al-kubrā* to the sons of Zahra al-Ḥalabī, who were his *sayyid* relatives , as well as to a number of other *sayyids* in Aleppo. Al-ʿAllāma stated in this *ijāza*, which lists his teachers back to the Prophet Muḥammad, that he had obtained an *ijāza* from his teacher Ḥusain, the son of Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī. Al-ʿAllāma described ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī as a good scholar of logic and philosophy (*al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqliyya*) who wrote important works. This *ijāza* was quoted in full by al-Majlisī in his *Biḥār al-anwār*.[635] ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān was a teacher of Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī.[636]

Sulaymān added a new *nisba* to ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān that I have not encountered in earlier sources, namely 'al-Sitrāwī'. He wrote: 'al-Sitrāwī as an attribution to Sitra, which is a large village in Bahrain, is based on an irregular linguistic analogy.'[637] He neither offered a grammatical explanation for this irregular *nisba*, nor cited an earlier source. In fact, according to Arabic grammar the true *nisba* for Sitra is Sitrī, not Sitrāwī, because all of the later scholars who actually came from Sitra are named in the biographical dictionaries as al-Sitrī. These include Sulaymān himself, Muḥammad ibn Khalaf al-Sitrī, Hāshim al-Ṣayyāḥ al-Sitrī, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās al-Sitrī, Shibr ibn ʿAlī al-Sitrī and Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Taʿʿān al-Sitrī.[638] The *nisba* of Sitrāwī is therefore odd. The word itself is particularly vulnerable to distortion, especially given Sulaymān's possible motivation to create a certain image of an historic Shīʿī Baḥraynī tradition. The *nisba* may have been a twisted version of al-Sūrāwī, because ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī's teacher was Aḥmad ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī, whose teachers possessed Sūrāwī/Sarawī *nisbas* as observed earlier. A repercussion of Sulaymān's mistake may be seen in al-Oraibi's belief that ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān received his schooling exclusively in Baḥrayn, because ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān

[634] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 50-56.
[635] Muḥammah Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol.104, 60-137 esp.65.
[636] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī*, vol.1, 12.
[637] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 51.
[638] ʿAlī l-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn*, 132, 198, 201, 202, 217.

mentioned no teacher other than Ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī, who was attributed by Sulaymān to Sitra.[639]

Regarding ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān's scholarship, he was a philosopher and Ṣūfī who wrote almost exclusively on these subjects, but his treatises are still in manuscript form. Madelung wrote about ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, describing him as an Imāmī scholar and philosopher of the first half of the 7th/13th century who inclined to mysticism. He added that Ḥaydar al-Āmulī considered ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān 'among the scholars who ranked the Ṣūfī gnosis above all other knowledge.'[640]

Al-Oraibi wrote brief descriptions of a number of ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān's writings. The treatise *al-Ishārāt*, a metaphysical and esoteric book, addressed the questions of existence, prophethood and *wilāya* (sainthood). The author was heavily influenced by both Ibn ʿArabī's (d.1240 CE) *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and al-Ghazzālī's (d.1111 CE) *Mishkāt al-anwār*. Al-Oraibi states that mystical topics of this type were at that time unattractive in the Shīʿī milieu.[641] However, they were an attractive subject for discussion in North Iran. Al-Baḥrānī also wrote a commentary on *Risālat al-ṭayr* by Ibn Sīnā, entitled *Miftāḥ al-khayr sharḥ dībājat risālat al-ṭayr*, which only comments on the introduction to Ibn Sīnā's visionary recital treatise.[642] Al-Baḥrānī also commented on Ibn Sīnā's poem on the soul, *al-qaṣīda al-ʿayniyya*, in a treatise entitled *al-Minhāj al-mustaqīm ʿalā ṭarīqat al-ḥakīm*.[643] The treatise of *Miʿrāj al-salāma wa-minhāj al-karāma* dealt with the theme of the existence of the divine. It was intended as a refutation of one of the author's anonymous contemporaries on the subject of proving the logicality of viewing God.[644]

ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān was sponsored by the individual whom he addressed by title in the introduction to his treatise *al-Ishārāt*: Ghiyāth al-Milla wa-al-Dunya wa-al-Dīn. He did not

[639] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 39.
[640] W. Madelung, 'Bahrani, Jamal-al-Din' *Encyclopaedia Iranica* cites Ḥaydar al-Āmulī, *Jāmeʿ al-Abrār wa-manbaʿ al-asrār*, ed H. Corbin and O. Yaḥyā (Tehrān and Paris, 1969), 498. Accessed on 14/06/2013 http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bahrani-jamal-al-din-also-kamal-al-din-ali-b accessed in 14/06/2013
[641] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 40.
[642] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 45.
[643] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 42; Muḥammad al-Tājir al-Baḥrānī, *Muntaẓim al-Durrayn,* vol.3, 141-144.
[644] Ali al-Oraibi, *Shiʿi Renaissance*, 44.

provide the individual's name.[645] This person may have been either ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī (1283 CE) or ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Jaʿfar al-Nīsābūrī (1274 CE), both of whom also acted as patrons to ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān's student Maytham al-Baḥraynī, as will be seen below. This would mean that ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān was resident in Baghdād where these potential patrons held important political and administrative posts. Al-Samāhījī again followed the example of his teacher Sulaymān and wrote that ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān was buried in the village of Sitra beside the tomb of his teacher Ibn Saʿāda.[646] No early source supports the claim made by Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī, who also did not rely on earlier authorities.

3.5 Maytham ibn ʿAlī ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. *c.*1283 CE).

Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham ibn ʿAlī ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī is considered by modern historians of medieval Baḥrayn to have been the most important Baḥraynī scholar. He was a prolific writer and had a significant influence on many later scholars who quoted his opinions on linguistic, mystical and philosophical matters. Little is known regarding his teachers. In the *ijāzāt* of later scholars, such as Ibn Abī Jumhūr, he was listed as a student of the aforementioned ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī.[647] He was also said to have sat with al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (d.1277 CE) and engaged with him in fruitful discussion.[648] Among the students of Maytham were al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī, Muḥammad ibn Jahm al-Ḥillī and Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdulkarīm ibn Tāwūs al-Ḥillī.[649] Sulaymān wrote a short biography of Maytham in 1693 CE entitled *al-Sulāfa al-bahiyya fiʾl-tarjama al-maythamiyya*, which was quoted in full by Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī in his *Kashkūl.*[650] In his *Fihrist*, Sulaymān was the first historian to state that Maytham was born in 1239 CE without revealing his source for this piece of information.[651]

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[645] See the appendix of Ali al-Oraibi, *Shi'i Renaissance*, 241-249. The copy is from the library of the University of Firdawsi in Mashhad under the codex number 973.
[646] Muḥammad Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzāt ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn,* 175; Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn,* 253.
[647] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī,* 11-12.
[648] Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ṭarīḥī, *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn wa-Maṭlaʿ al-Nayyirayn* (Beirut: Dār wa-Maktabat al-Hilāl, 1985), vol.6, 172.
[649] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī*, 11; Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Amal al-Āmil*, vol. 2, 332; ʿAbdullāh Afandī, *Riyāḍ al-ʿUlamāʾ*, vol.5, 227.
[650] Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Kashkūl al-Baḥrānī aw Anīs al-Musāfir wa-Jalīs al-Khāṭir* (Beirut: Dār al-Murtaḍā, 2008), 39-49.
[651] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 63.

Indeed, Maytham was more famous than other 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' and his works and manuscripts are both abundant and well-preserved. On the questions of his origin and date and place of death, some allusions are to be found in the introductions to his works. In the introduction to his book *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha*, Maytham stated that when he left his home and family he came to Baghdād in the reign of ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī, who came to power in 1259 CE. Unfortunately, he did not mention from where he had come.[652] From the contents of a letter that Maytham sent to al-Ṭūsī, it may be inferred that he had lived in the city of al-Baṣra in his youth.[653] In the letter he asked al-Ṭūsī, who held a prominent administrative post in Baghdād, for financial support for the students of al-Baṣra who were in great need.[654]

In addition, Ibn al-Fuwaṭī (d.1323) wrote a brief biography of Maytham, in which he reported that Maytham came to Dār al-Salām (Baghdād) and sat with him. Maytham told Ibn al-Fuwaṭī that his teacher had been ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī. Maytham asked Ibn al-Fuwaṭī to make a copy of the letter which he himself had sent to Naṣīr al-Dīn (Ṭūsī), which Ibn al-Fuwaṭī did. Then Ibn al-Fuwaṭī described Maytham as an *adīb* (man of letter) and jurist, possessed of good morals and a cheery face. Ibn al-Fuwaṭī also wrote that Maytham resided in the house of Ṣafī al-Dīn ibn al-Aʿsar al-Ḥusainī.[655] This contemporary information records the movement of Maytham from al-Baṣra to Baghdād; yet still no evidence refers to Baḥrayn.

Two dates have been provided by the sources for Maytham's death. The first is 679/1280, given by Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī.[656] If this is correct, it means that the author died at the age of 43. This date appears to be incorrect, because a copy of Maytham's book *Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn*,

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[652] Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, 14. He writes: إلى أن قضت صروف الأيام بمفارقة الأهل والوطن وأوجبت تقلبات الأيام دخول دار السلام.

[653] Maytham writes: 'وقد كان المملوك سمع أن نوره المتلألئ وشعاعه المتعالي قد تألق بناحية الزوراء حتى اتصل بساحة البصرة' See the full reference in the next footnote.

[654] He writes: ' ولا شك ان المولى أيده الله بعنايته نور شعاعي من تلك الأنوار، وكوكب دري من تلك الأشجار، وسر إلهي برز إلى حيز الأطهار، ولطف رباني أهبط إلى هذه الدار، أيد الله مراتبه وشيد مناصبه، وأوسع مذاهبه، وأنار مناقبه. ولا شك أن صلاحه قد اتصل بأكثر القطر المعمور عمره الله بدوام دولته وقيام حجته، والمحاويج من قطرنا الضعيف مضطرون إلى ليف ترتيبه متشرفون إلى إفاضة شريف سيرته، وملاحظة عنايته، ومحاسن سننه خاصة المحاويج من طلبة العلم وسلاك مناهج الفضل والحلم، فمنهم شغله لجاج قلم الخراج عن النهوض إلى حيز التحقيق ومنهم من فقد مركوبه لعدم الراد عن سلوك الطريق يتحسرون على التعلي إلى أفق عليين، فيأتي وقتهم إلى أسفل سافلين، يستغيثون من ضيق الأقفاص فينادون ولات حين مناص. هذه حالتهم المفصح عنها مقالتهم، والله المستعان وعليه التكلان. فإن أمكن الأخذ بأيديهم بجميل عنايته، والاهتمام من أمورهم بجزيل إفاضته ذلك منحة من الله تعالى تغشاهم، ونفخة لديه تتلقاهم، وبها يكون الذكر الجميل والشكر الجزيل من الخلائق أجمعين في الدنيا والنعيم المقيم والرضوان من رب العالمين في الآخرة. فإنه نعم المسعى لراحة العباد والعقبى يوم التناد. ' Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *Risālat al-Shaykh Maytham al-Baḥrānī ilā al-Shaykh Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī*. Manuscript. From Markaz Iḥyāʾ Mīrāth Islāmī, Qum. 557/6, 559-562.

[655] ʿAbdulrazzāq ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *Majmaʿ al-Ādāb wa-Muʿjam al-Alqāb*, ed. Muḥammad al-Kāẓim (Qum: Muʾasasat al-Ṭibāʿa waʾl-Nashr Wazārat al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Irshād al-Islāmī, 1416/1994), vol.4, 266.

[656] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 63.

a commentary on *Nahj al-balāgha*, was written in 681/1282, according to a note at the end of the manuscript. The other date that has been suggested for his death is 699/1300, provided by Iʿjāz Ḥusain al-Kantūrī (d.1869) in *Kashf al-ḥujub wa-l-astār ʿan asmāʾ al-kutub wa-l-asfār*.[657] Āghā Buzūrg was unsure of the date when writing about Maytham in his *al-Dharīʿa*; he stated that Maytham may have died between 679/1280 and 699/1300.[658]

The earliest piece of information regarding the place of his death was given by Ibrāhīm al-Kafʿamī (d.1500 CE), who said that Maytham died and was buried in Dār al-Salām Baghdād.[659] However, ʿAbdullāh al-Samāhījī, more than two centuries later, wrote that Maytham's death and burial occurred in Baḥrayn.[660] Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī (d.1772 CE) wrote that Maytham died in Baḥrayn and was buried in al-Māḥūz in the village of Haltā, adding that the tomb of Maytham's grandfather was located in the village of al-Dūnaj. He then stated that some people (referring to al-Kafʿamī) had claimed that Maytham was buried in Iraq, but he rejected this piece of information, although it predated al-Samāhījī's claim by more than 200 years.[661] Al-Bilādī (d.1922 CE) was suspicious about the real location of Maytham's tomb, but did not question whether it lay in Baghdād instead of Baḥrayn. He was uncertain whether the correct tomb was in the village of Dūnaj or in Haltā in al-Māḥūz, both in Baḥrayn. Al-Bilādī described that although he had visited both tombs as a matter of precaution, he was inclined to believe that the tomb in Haltā was Maytham's actual resting place because of the efficacious results of prayers conducted at that tomb, as well the large number of dreams experienced by its visitors.[662]

A story of Maytham's wisdom and modesty recounts that he was invited by the scholars of al-Ḥilla to visit their city and hold discussions. I was unable to find any source for this story earlier than *Mustaṭāb-e majālis al-muʾminīn* by Nūrallāh Shūshtarī (d.1610), which was written in Persian and does not contain any references.[663] The story was subsequently quoted and

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[657] Iʿjāz Ḥusain al-Kantūrī, *Kashf al-Ḥujub wa-l-Astār ʿan Asmāʾ al-Kutub wa-l-Asfār,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥidāyat Wilāyat Ḥusain (Pitz Misn: n.p., 1330[1912]), 375. However, in another page the author said that Maytham died in 679/1280, see page 322. In both pages he cited al-Bahāʾī's *Kashkūl*, meaning that the discrepancy in dates may have been due to a typographical error.

[658] Muḥammad Āghā Buzūrg al-Ṭehrānī, *al-Dharīʿa ilā Taṣānīf al-Shīʿa* (Beirut: Dār al-Aḍwāʾ, n.d.), vol.14, 149.

[659] Cited in Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn*, 250; ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn*, 60.

[660] Muḥammad Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzat ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 173.

[661] Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn*, 250.

[662] ʿAlī al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn*, 60.

[663] Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Nūrallāh Shūshtarī, *Mustaṭāb-e majālis al-muʾminīn* (Tehrān: Kitābfurūshī-e Islāmiyya, 1377/1998), vol.2, 210-212.

translated in a*l-Sulāfa al-bahiyya fiʾl-tarjama al-maythamiyya* written in 1104/1693 by Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Baḥrānī, who perhaps did not find the story in Arabic elsewhere.[664] These two signs suggest that the anecdote may have been an example of the usual hagiographical stories told of such scholars.

The early pieces of evidence presented above indicate that Maytham lived his early life and received his early education in al-Baṣra. He later travelled to al-Ḥilla and Baghdād, where he died. No early source made any reference to Baḥrayn. Maytham was linked to Baḥrayn for this first time four centuries later in the works of Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī and his student al-Samāhījī.

The popular beliefs in the *awliyāʾ* and their shrines, and the Baḥraynī people's spiritual needs as embodied in dreams and prayers beside the tomb are very much a part of the later revision of his biography. It is also worth mentioning that a scholar from pre-Safavid Baḥrayn named Yaḥyā ibn Ḥusain ibn ʿAshīra al-Baḥrānī (alive in 1563 CE), who emigrated to Iran, composed a concise treatise primarily focusing on prominent Twelver scholars. In this treatise, when he listed Maytham al-Baḥrānī and Aḥmad ibn al-Mutawwaj al-Baḥrānī, he did not write that they were buried in Baḥrayn.[665]

In terms of his scholarship, Maytham's biographers suggest that his work proved influential for many scholars in different fields. For example, the famous linguist al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d.1414 CE) quoted Maytham's writings and interpretations in his books *al-Miṣbāḥ fī sharḥ al-miftāḥ* and *Ḥāshiyat al-muṭawwal,* referring to him as 'one of my teachers.'[666] Al-Shahīd al-Thānī (d.1558 CE), in his books *Sharḥ al-lumʿa* and *Sharḥ sharāʾiʿ al-Islam*, relied on Maytham's reasoning to address a number of questions, and appeared to include Maytham in a description of 'some good fellows'. Al-Shahīd al-Thānī's student Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-ʿĀmilī explained in his book *Madārik al-aḥkām sharḥ sharāʾiʿ al-Islām* that his sheikh had indeed been referring to Maytham. Moreover, Sheikh Bahāʾī (d.1621 CE) mentioned Maytham several times

[664] This short biographical treatise is quoted in full in Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Kashkūl al-Baḥrānī*, 39-49.
[665] Yaḥyā ibn ʿAshīra al-Baḥrānī, *Risāla fī Mashāyikh al-Shīʿa*, ed. Nizār al-Ḥasan (Beirut: Mu'asasat al-Balāgh, 2009), 58, 63. It might be argued that he did not find it necessary to record every detail concerning these scholars, which is true, but I found it necessary to mention this work which predates Sulaymān and was written by a Baḥraynī.
[666] Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Kashkūl al-Baḥrānī* (Beirut: Dār al-Murtḍā, 2008), 40. Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh was aware of commentaries on the *ḥāshiyat al-Muṭawwal*, such as that of al-Muḥaqqiq al-Chalabī, who referred to 'some good fellows' – meaning Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham al-Baḥrānī.

in his *Kashkūl*.[667] An important philosopher who died in 1640 CE, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīrāzī – known as Mullā Ṣadrā –is said to have quoted Maytham in his book *Ḥāshiyat sharḥ al-tajrīd*, although the attribution of this work to Mullā Ṣadrā is debatable. Finally, Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī described Maytham as a master of philosophy who surpassed Plato and Aristotle.[668]

Fakhr al-Dīn Al-Ṭarīḥī (d.1674) was the first to write that Maytham was a teacher of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī in *figh* (jurisprudence); he included this detail in his *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn wa-maṭlaʿ al-nayyirayn*, in his entry for the letters *m*/*th*/*m*.[669] However, Ali al-Oraibi and Muḥammad al-Gharawī, the editor of Maytham's book *Al-najāt fī al-qiyāma,* rejected this piece of information. They demonstrated that Maytham was too young to have taught Ṭūsī jurisprudence. Maytham was 25 years old when the 65-year-old Ṭūsī came to Iraq in 1236 CE as an official for the Mongols. Al-Gharawī added that it was not reported by any source known to him that Maytham travelled to Iran or that Ṭūsī travelled to Baḥrayn.[670]

Maytham was particularly keen on developing relationships with politicians. Those he contacted included: the governor of al-Baṣra and Wāṣiṭ, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Nīsābūrī (d.1274); the Mongol's treasurer in Baghdād ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī; and Masʿūd ibn Kurshasb. He served these officials at court and educated their children. He stated in his introduction to the book *al-Najāt fiʾl-qiyāma fī taḥqīq amr al-imāma* (date unknown) that he had been blessed to meet the just governor and guardian of the sect Abū al-Muẓaffar ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Jaʿfar al-Nīsābūrī, who asked him to write a treatise on the concept of Imāma. Al-Nīsābūrī was head of the police in al-Baṣra and Wāṣiṭ, appointed by ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī. Maytham described al-Nīsābūrī as being loyal to the offspring of the Prophet, and as the patron of many scholars, himself included. He added that al-Nīsābūrī was generous and made him feel at home and reduced the suffering of being distant from his country and family; again, he did not specify from which country he had arrived. Maytham stated that he had been about to decline al-Nīsābūrī's request due to the difficulty of the trip and the distance from his home and family, but decided to begin writing the promised book so that no one could claim that he was ungrateful to his patron.[671] Maytham wrote

[667] Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Kashkūl al-Baḥrānī*, 42.
[668] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī*, vol. 1,11.
[669] Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ṭarīḥī, *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn*, vol.6, 172.
[670] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *al-Najāt fiʾl-Qiyāma fī Taḥqīq Amr al-Imāma*, ed. Muḥammad al-Gharawī (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqā, 2009), 14-16.
[671] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *al-Najāt fiʾl-Qiyāma*, 37-38.

another book for ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Nīsābūrī, *Qawāʿid al-marām fī ʿilm al-kalām* (before 1274). In the introduction, he stated that he had been asked by the great king al-Nīsābūrī to compose a brief study on the basic principles of theology, *uṣūl al-dīn*, in which he offered refutations of the non-Twelver arguments.[672] None of these books contain an indication of the date of composition by Maytham, except for a note left in 717/1317 by a copyist of *Qawāʿid al-marām*, who dated the work to 676/1277 and stated that it had been written in Baghdād. This date is perhaps incorrect as al-Nīsābūrī died three years before 1277 CE, as recorded by Ibn al-Fuwaṭī (d.1323 CE) in his *Majmaʿ al-ādāb wa-muʿjam al-alqāb*.[673]

Maytham's relationships with the famous historian ʿAṭā Malik ibn Muḥammad al-Juwaynī (d.1283), who served also as the Mongols' treasurer in Baghdād, and with the latter's influential brother Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Juwaynī (d.1284-5), are also evident in the introductions to Maytham's works. He revealed that he had written his commentary *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha al-kabīr*, called *Miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* (677/1279 in Baghdād), for ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī and his brother. Maytham stated that while attending the court of ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī, who held office in 1259 CE, it appeared to him that al-Juwaynī was interested in the book *Nahj al-balāgha* by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī. Maytham therefore decided to write his commentary and dedicated it to ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī.[674]

A couple of years later, Maytham embarked on abridging his large commentary on *Nahj al-balāgha*. He explained in the introduction to this commentary that he had been encouraged by ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī to write a shorter version of the commentary for his two sons Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad and Abū al-ʿAbbās ʿAlī. He completed the book in January 1283 CE.[675] It is not certain whether or not Maytham served as a personal tutor to al-Juwaynī's sons. Maytham also wrote another book for ʿAṭā Malik al-Juwaynī's son Abū al-Muẓaffar Manṣūr, entitled *Tajrīd al-balāgha*.[676]

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[672] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *Qawāʿid al-Marām fī ʿIlm al-Kalām*, ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī and Maḥmūd al-Marʿashī (n.p.: Maṭbaʿat al-Ṣadr, 1406[1986]), 20.
[673] ʿAbdulrazzāq ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *Majmaʿ al-Ādāb wa-Muʿjam al-Alqāb*, vol.1, 226-227.
[674] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha* (al-Manāma: Maktabat Fakhrāwī, 2007), 14-15.
[675] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *Ikhtiyār Miṣbāḥ al-Sālikīn*, ed. Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī (Mashhad: Majmaʿ al-Buḥūth al-ʿilmiyya, 1408 [1988])
[676] Muḥammad Āghā Buzūrg al-Ṭehrānī, *al-Dharīʿa ilā Taṣānīf al-Shīʿa*, vol.3, 352.

Also, Maytham wrote in the introduction to his book *Sharḥ al-miʾat kalima* that he attended the court of the minister Shihāb al-Dunya wa-al-Dīn Masʿūd ibn Kurshasb, to whom he dedicated the book.[677] It was not possible to identify concrete information regarding Masʿūd. However, the editor Muḥammad al-Gharawī suggested that Masʿūd may have been one of the six sons of Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Juwaynī: Muḥammad, Atābeg, Farajallāh, Masʿūd, Zakariyya and Yaḥyā. All six sons were killed by Arghūn Khān (d.1291), who accused their father Muḥammad al-Juwaynī of poisoning and killing Abaqā Khān (d.1282). Al-Gharawī speculates that the name Kurshasb may have been the actual Persian name of Masʿūd's father, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad.[678] Yet it is unclear why Maytham would use the Persian style to refer to Masʿūd's father, when he used the Arabic name Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad in another book, *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha*.

Maytham produced numerous writings on a variety of subjects. His works included: *Qawāʿid al-marām fī ʿilm al-kalām* (written before 1274 CE); *al-Najāt fiʾl-qiyāma fī taḥqīq amr al-imāma* (before 1274 CE); *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha* (1279 CE) and its abridged version *Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* (1283 CE); *Sharḥ al-miʾat kalima li-ʾl-imām ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (perhaps before 1282); and *Tajrīd al-balāgha*. Maytham also wrote *al-Miʿrāj al-samāwī* and *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, a commentary on his teacher ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān's book *Al-ishārāt*. However, copies of his work *Istiqsāʾ al-naẓar fī imāmat al-aʾimma al-ithnay ʿashar* apparently have not survived.

3.6 Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mutawwaj al-Baḥrānī Died in 1417 CE.

The final fourteenth-century scholar to be commonly identified as Baḥraynī was Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mutawwaj al-Baḥrānī. As with Maytham, he exerted a certain degree of influence on other scholars, albeit to a lesser extent; they quoted his opinions and even his poems on *ahl al-bayt*. According to his biographers, he was mentioned in numerous non-Baḥraynī sources.[679] He was also mentioned in the *ijāza* of Ibn abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī.[680]

[677] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ al-Miʾat kalima li-ʾl-Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqa, 2010), 2.
[678] Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *al-Najāt fiʾl-Qiyāma*, 24-26.
[679] Muḥammad al-Tājir al-Baḥrānī, *Muntaẓim al-Durrayn*, vol.1, 143-145.
[680] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī*, 7-8.

There is some confusion between the biographers of Ibn al-Mutawwaj due to the existence of two scholars named Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh, possessing two distinct epithets: Fakhr al-Dīn and Jamāl al-Dīn. They also differed in their grandfathers' names: respectively Saʿīd and Muḥammad. Hence, the first of these scholars was Fakhr al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Saʿīd ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan. The second was Jamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan. However, it is more likely that they were in fact one person, as it was common practice for people to discard a name or change an epithet. Here, the name Saʿīd was perhaps dropped.[681]

It is unknown where or when Ibn al-Mutawwaj was born. He received his education in al-Ḥilla, studied under Muḥammad ibn al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥillī (d.1369 CE), known as Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn,[682] and was a friend of al-Shahīd al-Awwal Muḥammad ibn Jamāl al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī (d.1385 CE), as claimed by Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh.[683]

Ibn al-Mutawwaj taught a number of important scholars, including: Aḥmad ibn Fahad ibn Idrīs al-Maqqarī al-Aḥsāʾī (died after 1403 CE); Aḥmad ibn Fahad al-Ḥillī (d.1437 CE); his son Nāṣir ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mutawwaj; Aḥmad ibn Mukhaddam al-Uwālī and Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Rifāʿa al-Sābʿī (d.1423 CE). The latter mentioned his teacher's name in an introduction to his book *Sharḥ qawāʿid al-ʿAllāma*; he also praised Ibn al-Mutawwaj's book *Al-wasīla*, which is also a commentary on al-ʿAllāma's *qawāʿid*. [684]

Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, in his *Jawāhir al-Baḥrayn fī ʿulamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, wrote that he heard a group of his teachers – which included his father and his teacher Sulaymān ibn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān – saying that Ibn al-Mutawwaj returned to Baḥrayn (Uwāl) and held official religious positions such as judge and head of the *ḥisba* apparatus.[685] No written authority or *isnād* is provided to prove this claim.

[681] Muḥammad al-Tājir al-Baḥrānī, *Muntaẓim al-Durrayn*, vol.1, 150, 155-157.
[682] ʿAlī al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn*, 65-66.
[683] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 69-74.
[684] Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, *Ghawālī al-laʾālī*, vol.1, 6-7.
[685] Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī, *Fihrist Āl Bābūya wa-ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī (Qum: Maṭbaʿat al-Khayyām, 1983), 89.

From his son Nāṣir, who copied his father's book *al-Nāsikh wal-l-mansūkh*, we know that Ibn al-Mutawwaj died in 1417 CE. The son did not say where his father died. Again al-Samāhījī wrote that Ibn al-Mutawwaj's tomb was located on the isle of al-Nabih Ṣāliḥ (Ukul) in Uwāl.[686]

Biographers listed approximately fifteen works by Ibn al-Mutawwaj, most of which are unfortunately unavailable. His extant manuscripts include the treatises *al-Nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh* on Qurʾānic studies, *Kifāyat al-ṭālibīn* on theology, and *mā lā yasaʿ al-mukallaf al-ikhlāl bihi* on Jaʿfarī jurisprudence. Ibn al-Mutawwaj also authored a work of jurisprudence in which he selected and commented on five hundred essential Qurʾānic verses related to Islamic jurisprudence. The book was edited and published under the title: *Minhāj al-hidāya fī bayān khamsmiʾat al-āya*.[687]

4. Socio-political Context of Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī's Exaggeration of the Historical Roots of Twelver Scholarship in Safavid Bahrain.

The previous sections of this chapter highlighted the evolution of the biographies of those scholars who held the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī. This process took five centuries and resulted in scholars' portrayal as natives of Baḥrayn and possessors of tombs and shrines in that island. Here, the socio-political context in which the history of Twelver scholarship was exaggerated by Safavid Baḥraynī scholars will be addressed.

The question of when the region of Baḥrayn became a centre of scholarship with scholars known by their name is also obscure. It seems that Twelver scholars began to emerge increasingly in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[688] Prior to the Safavid conquest of Baḥrayn by the army commander Imām Qulī-Khān in 1602 CE, the scholars of Baḥrayn, al-Qaṭīf and al-Aḥsāʾ, were not in agreement with the policies and religious representation of Twelverism as practised during the first half of the sixteenth century by the first two Safavid shāhs: Ismāʿīl I (r.1501-1524 CE) and Ṭāhmasp I (r.1524-1576 CE). Andrew Newman, who studied the position

[686] Muḥammad Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzat ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 163-164.
[687] Aḥmad ibn Mutawwaj al-Baḥrānī, *Minhāj al-Hidāya fī Bayān Khamsmiʾat al-Āya*, ed. Muḥammad Bayyin (Qum: Qism al-Abḥāth waʾl-Dirāsāt fiʾl-Ḥawza al-ʿIlmiyya bi-Qazwīn, 1429/2009)
[688] This question requires a separate research with an approach that does not rely entirely upon the *nisba* of the scholars.

taken by scholars of Iraq, al-Ḥijāz and Baḥrayn toward these early Safavid shāhs, provides four reasons for such disagreement. According to Newman: 'clerical unease with the Safawid association with the faith stemmed from the abruptness of Ismail's interest in and conversion to the faith; the extreme nature of Safawid religious expression which, after Tabrīz, comprised an unorthodox blend of non-Shiʿi and Shiʿi allusions; the Safawid elite's clear lack of interest in the specifics of the faith; and critical military defeats suffered by the Safawids less than fifteen years after Tabrīz which suggested the transient nature of the Safawid Shiʿi experiment.' Newman also remarks that 'In the Gulf there is no record that such prominent scholars as Shaykh Dawud b. Abdallah b. Abi Shafiz, who had his own school in Bahrain, or his contemporary al-Husayn b. al-Hasan al-Gharifi (d.1001/1593) had any contact with the Safawids.'[689]

In 1602 CE the island of Baḥrayn fell under the rule of the Shīʿite Twelver Safavid Empire during the reign of Shāh ʿAbbās I (r.1587-1629). Baḥrayn remained in their hands until 1717 CE, when the Omanis annexed the island during the reign of the last Safavid Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain (r.1694–1722 CE). Prior to the Safavids takeover of Baḥrayn, the region had been under Portuguese and Hormuzian rule since 1521 CE. As Cole explains, these rulers placed restrictions on Twelver Shīʿites, and particularly on their scholars, limiting their patronage and preventing them from holding administrative posts. According to Cole, the subsequent Safavid rule was indirect; it was accomplished by encouraging the Twelver ideology and manipulating rival political parties. He adds that the Safavids promoted Twelver Shīʿism in Baḥrayn as an ideological solution to a strategic problem, namely Baḥrayn's relative distance from mainland Iran and its close proximity to their Sunni Ottoman rivals.[690]

In such a competitive environment, history becomes a crucial tool for political legitimacy and the reinforcement of doctrinal identity. Safavid patronage of Twelver Shīʿism in Baḥrayn could be observed in the number of Twelver Baḥraynī scholars who immigrated to Iran to serve in the Safavid judiciary and administration. Arjomand and Newman showed that the Baḥraynī scholars outnumbered their fellows of Jabal ʿĀmil in terms of migration to Safavid Iran in the

[689] Andrew Newman, 'The Myth of the Clerical Migration to Safawid Iran: Arab Shiite Opposition to ʿAlī al-Karakīand Safawid Shiism,' *Die Welt des Islams* 33/1 (1993): 66-112, esp.68, 108; Andrew Newman, *Twelver Shiism: Unity and Diversity in the Life of Islam, 632 to 1722* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 166-167, 192-193.
[690] Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War*, 4, 44-52.

late seventeenth century.[691] This indicates the amount of effort which the Safavids had exerted in promoting Twelverism in Baḥrayn in the seventeenth century.

Cole explains that the Safavid policy of promoting *uṣūlī* Twelverism in Bahrain took the form of creating religious institutions. First, the Safavids established the Friday congregational prayers, and then encouraged the praying imāms to announce blessings on Safavid rule at the end of the prayers. Second, they created and funded the position of the *uṣūlī* Imāmī chief religious magistracy, which Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī served as an official Imāmī scholar. He also led the Friday prayer and even wrote a treatise that supported the obligation to perform this prayer.[692]

Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī (d.1772 CE) stated that the first scholar (perhaps he means one of the earliest scholars) to introduce the science of *ḥadīth* (the traditions of the Prophet and the Twelve Imāms) to Baḥrayn was ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Qadamī al-Baḥrānī (d.1653 CE). Al-Qadamī al-Baḥrānī travelled to Iran and met with sheikh Bahāʾī, the sheikh al-Islam of the Safavid Empire. Upon his return to Baḥrayn he was appointed as the leader/chief of the scholars and the *muḥtasib* (market inspector) and *raʾīs* (chief).[693] This report provides a clue about the shape of Twelverism in Baḥrayn before the Safavids. The science of *ḥadīth* is essential for uṣūlī Twelverism, and without these prophetic and Imam's *ḥadīth*s, it was difficult to write on *fiqh* and to derive and establish principles for the Twelver dogma. Hence, Twelverism in pre-Safavid Baḥrayn seems to have been poorly defined and unlegalistic, which indeed accords with other observations made in previous chapters.[694] Also, as we mentioned earlier in Chapter Seven, a Twelver community in

[691] Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shiʿite Iran from the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 129-130; Andrew Newman, *Twelver Shiism*, appendix I. The numbers given by Arjomand and Newman were based on the *nisbas* of scholars, which alone is not a sufficient evidence of their origins; however, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources indeed reported that many scholars from Baḥrayn had emigrated to Iran. See for example, Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn*, 12, 16-17, 37, 59, 66, 70, 89, 98-99, 132.
[692] Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War*, 45-52.
[693] Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, *Luʾluʾat al-Baḥrayn*, 15-17; Juan Cole, 'Rival Empires of Trade and Imami Shiʿism in Eastern Arabia', 49.
[694] See the discussion of the inscription of Abū Sinān, who called himself al-Qāʾim (Chapter Three), the report of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa about the phrase inserted in the *adhān* of al-Qaṭīf which did not match legal prescription (Chapter Seven) and Ibn al-Muqarrab's unsettled religious doctrine (Chapter Seven).

Uwāl sought outside scholars to get answers for their questions. They sent a letter to al-Karakī (d.1533/4) to ask about basic questions on prayer performance while travelling.[695]

The exaggeration of the history of Baḥrayn's early Twelver scholarship was propagated by Sulaymān during the lifetime of his teacher Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (1616–1698-9 CE), who was the most powerful and influential Twelver cleric in the Safavid Empire. Al-Majlisī was appointed by Shāh Sulaymān (d.1694 CE) as 'Sheikh al-Islam' in 1686/7 CE. He proved very active in creating religious policies and in promoting Twelverism in Safavid territories.[696] He reached the height of his power during the reign of his pupil and later Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain (d.1722 CE), who left political power to be in his hands.[697] As a literary means of supporting the Safavid political project and reinforcing Twelver scholars' religious and political authority, al-Majlisī, shortly before his designation as 'sheikh al-Islam', received court funding to compile his massive *ḥadīth* book *Biḥār al-anwār*. This work dealt primarily with the Imāms, depicting them as the ultimate source of knowledge on all matters of religion.[698] One of Majlisī's students was Mīrzā ʿAbdullāh Afandī, who travelled to Baḥrayn and requested Sulaymān al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī to write a biographical dictionary of the region. Sulaymān responded positively and wrote *Fihrist ʿulamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, which Afandī used as a source for his major biographical dictionary *Riyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ wa-ḥiyāḍ al-fuḍalāʾ*. The *fihrist* (1688 CE) was completed two years after the designation of Majlisī as 'sheikh al-Islam' in Iṣfahān in 1686 CE. Hence, it appears that there were at this time many literary projects that served the same object: the collection of Twelver traditions and the documenting of Twelver scholars and writings on a large scale.

Regarding Sulaymān's relation to the Safavid state, some details from his biography reveal his behaviour toward it. First, it is worth mentioning that Sulaymān developed ties with the Safavid court and tried to present himself as useful to the state. Al-Samāhījī writes that his teacher Sulaymān al-Māḥūzī wrote a book called *al-Arbaʿūn ḥadīth fī al-imāma* in honour of

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[695] Husain Muḥammad Husain, 'Qaryat al-Dirāz: Bayna al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-Tārīkhiyya wa-l-Asāṭīr al-Marwiyya', *Al-Wasaṭ* (Kingdom of Bahrain), 14 March 2015. Accessed 4 April 2015: http://www.alwasatnews.com/4571/news/read/970877/1.html

[696] Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God*, 191.

[697] Rula Jurdi Abisaab, *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 126-130. Rula casts doubts on the narrative of Majlisi's use of force in converting Sunnis, 128.

[698] Andrew Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 98; Abi Saab, *Converting Persia*, 129; Douglas Streusand, *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals* (Westview Press: Boulder, 2011), 156-7, 166.

Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain, who in return presented him with two thousand *dirhams*. Second, Sulaymān was well versed in the Persian language and translated a treatise that refuted non-Twelver doctrines.[699] He did this perhaps to participate in the grand state-led project to convert the Sunni population of the empire. Third, it is possible that Sulaymān was striving to compete with a contemporary ʿĀmilī scholar, al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī (d.1693 CE), who wrote a biographical dictionary in which he devoted the first section to the scholars of his native country, Jabal ʿĀmil in modern southern Lebanon. Even the title of the book, which was written in 1686 CE in Mashhad in Safavid Iran, shows off the name of his country: *Amal al-āmil fī ʿulamāʾ jabal ʿāmil*.[700] Two years later, Sulaymān wrote his dictionary on Baḥraynī scholars. In compiling it, he may have sought to enhance his native country's reputation as a land possessed of an ancient and deep-rooted scholarly tradition, which could supply the Safavid state with scholars comparable to the ʿĀmilī scholars. All of this suggests that Sulaymān possessed his own aspirations in service to the Safavid state.

There is also a social or a spiritual explanation for the exaggeration of Baḥrayn' Twelver history. As in the Christian and Asian worlds, the creation of shrines for venerated saints (*awliyāʾ*) and scholars by both Sunni and Shīʿite Muslims was, and to a lesser extent still is, a common phenomenon. Shrines possess many functions in Muslim society. They fulfil spiritual needs, support political legitimacy and enhance doctrinal identity. Most of the shrines located throughout the Muslim world have no authentic historical foundations. Recent historians and social anthropologists have presented several explanations for these phenomena, by questioning the motives behind the creation of the shrines, as well as the initial choice of locations and the identity of the buried figures.[701] For example, in his study of the rediscovery and rebuilding of Shīʿite shrines in Damascus, Yasser Tabbaa writes: 'Generally speaking, in Shi'ite Islam the process of discovery and sanctification of a shrine is not based on verifiable material evidence,

[699] Muḥammad Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzat ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 127-8.
[700] Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Amal al-Āmil fī ʿUlamāʾ Jabal ʿĀmil*, ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥusainī (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-Wafāʾ, 1983)
[701] For literature on the veneration of saints and shrines in Islam see Ignaz Goldziher, 'Veneration of Saints in Islam,' in *Muslim Studies (Muhammedanische Studien)*, trans. C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern, vol. II (London: Allan & Unwin, 1971), 255-262; Nadia Abu-Zahra, *The Pure and Powerful: Studies in Contemporary Muslim Society* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1997); Vincent Cornell, *The Realm of the Saint* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998); Josef Meri, *The Cult of Saints Among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford: University Press, 2002); Yasser Tabbaa, 'Invented Pieties: The Rediscovery and Rebuilding of the Shrine of Sayyida Ruqayya in Damascus, 1975-2006' *Artibus Asiae* 67, 1 (2007): 95-112.

such as relics, but is often the product of a dream or a vision, which is then subsequently validated by some form of consensus.'[702] Indeed, we have already observed such phenomenon when reading the reports on the tombs of early 'al-Baḥrānī scholars'.

Currently, the largest shrine in Bahrain is that of Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī. Information concerning his tomb, as discussed above, first appeared only in the early eighteenth century with the work of al-Samāhījī. He wrote that the tomb was in the village of al-Ghurayfa, in the area of al-Māḥūz and it was visited by people. He added that the tomb of Maytham's grandfather was located in the cemetery of al-Dūnaj, also in the al-Māḥūz area.[703] However, it appears that until the 1920s CE some Bahraini Shīʿite people were unsure of the tomb's exact location, and eventually they chose another site to build the shrine and mosque: in Haltā instead of al-Ghurayfa. The biographer ʿAlī al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī (1922 CE) wrote: '[Maytham's] tomb is said to have been located either in the cemetery of al-Dūnaj or in Haltā in al-Māḥūz, and both were famous for being Maytham's tomb. I visited both of them, although I am inclined to believe that it is in Halta because of the many dreams which the people saw, and the people who prayed there felt the signs of God's acceptance and answers.'[704]

At the beginning of the twentieth century the scholar Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad Abū al-Makārim erected a mosque and a shrine to Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī in the village of Haltā. In 1989 CE the mosque was rebuilt with the shrine placed inside it. The architect of the mosque was Yūsuf Dāwūd al-Ṣāʾigh, who designed it in the traditional Bahraini style.[705] The village of Haltā or Hartā is no longer called by this name because; it has been absorbed into the larger area of al-Jufayr in south-east al-Manāma.

Hence, not only was the information about the very existence of Maytham al-Baḥrānī's tomb firstly appeared in the early eighteenth century by al-Samāhījī, but al-Samāhījī's designation of its location in the village of al-Ghurayfa was changed by the early twentieth century scholar Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad Abū al-Makārim, who constructed a mosque and a shrine in the village of Haltā (Umm al-Ḥaṣam) instead.

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[702] Yasser Tabbaa, 'Invented Pieties: The Rediscovery and Rebuilding of the Shrine of Sayyida Ruqayya in Damascus', 97.
[703] Muḥammad Āl Mikbās al-Baḥrānī, *Ijāzat ʿUlamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, 173-174.
[704] ʿAlī al-Bilādī al-Baḥrānī, *Anwār al-Badrayn*, 60.
[705] Jaffariya Waqf Direcorate, The Minstry of Justice and Islamic Affairs, Kingdom of Bahrain: http://www.jwd.gov.bh/view.php?page=shikh_maythm#تاريخ عمارة المرقد

In sum, the status of religion on the island of Baḥrain/Uwāl during the period of Majlisī's authority as 'sheikh al-Islam' (1680s CE) witnessed a significant shift from a relatively poorly-defined and folkloric/popular Shīʿism to a relatively well-defined *uṣūlī* Twelverism.[706] This shift may be observed by means of three indicators: first, the reconciliation of the Twelver scholars of Baḥrayn with the Safavid state; second, the high number of Baḥraynī clerical immigrants to Iran, outnumbering the ʿĀmilīs and those from other Arab regions; third, and most importantly for this research; the attempts of deepening the history of Twelverism in Baḥrayn by depicting Baḥrayn as having produced an original group of medieval scholars. This was made by a student of Majlisī, Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī, who was the official religious leader of Safavid Baḥrayn, together with his student ʿAbdullāh ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Samāhījī, who later became a 'sheikh al-Islam' of the Safavid Empire during the Afghan attacks on Iran.

5. Conclusion.

This chapter dealt with questions related to Twelver scholars who were believed by modern historians to have been native of Baḥrayn where they lived and died during the twelfth, thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. It has long been believed that the region of Baḥrayn, and particularly the island of Uwāl, was a centre of sophisticated Shīʿī learning and a home to a number of prominent Twelver scholars. This chapter explained that this preception was established by the Safavid Baḥraynī scholar and state official Sulaymān ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī (d.1709 CE), whose short biographical dictionary, *Fihrist ʿulamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*, listed twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth-century scholars who held the *nisba* of 'al-Baḥrānī' and attributed them to Baḥrayn. Sulaymān's student ʿAbdullāh ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Samāhījī (d.1723 CE) developed this perception, adding new information regarding the locations of these scholars' tombs. Historians ever since have adopted this view without subjecting it to analysis, and it has seemingly become a consensus. This chapter critiques that perception by tracking the earliest pieces of information regarding these scholars and comparing them with the later additional details. It may be concluded that the designation of these scholars as Baḥraynī in identity, and the alleged pinpointing of their tombs' locations, are not based on early sources. These claims appear

[706] Baḥrayn became later a strong hold for the School of Akhbārism.

to have been only established approximately four to five centuries after the deaths of the scholars concerned. Early evidence suggests that these scholars were closely connected to cities in Iraq and Iran, such as Baghdād, al-Ḥilla, al-Baṣra and Kāshān.

The socio-political context of the exaggeration in the Twelver scholarship of medieval Baḥraynī by Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī was that of Safavid attempts to use history as a political tool to reinforce political legitimacy and to promote *uṣūlī* Twelverism throughout the empire including Uwāl. Perhaps the Safavid Uwālī/Baḥrainī scholars aimed to portray Baḥrayn as a centre of a long-standing tradition of Shīʿī scholarship and that the only polity that is legitimately qualified to rule Baḥrayn was the Shīʿite Safavid state. Furthermore, Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī had close connection to the Safavid state in which they obtained higher offices. Sulaymān was a student of Majlisī, who served as 'Sheikh al-islam' of the Safavid Empire during the period when many biographical dictionaries were compiled, such as *Amal al-āmil* by al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Riyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ wa-ḥiyāḍ al-fuḍalāʾ* by ʿAbdullāh Afandī, and Sulaymān's *fihrist ʿulamāʾ al-Baḥrayn*. Hence, the exaggeration of Baḥrayn's religion history appeared in a context of Safavid attempt of rewriting the history of Twelverism.

Conclusion

This thesis focused on the history of eastern Arabia known as the region of Baḥrayn *c.*1050s–*c.*1400 CE, with a concentration on its politics, economy, literature and religion. This period has been somewhat neglected in the literature and was described by recent historians as extremely obscure and lacking in good evidence. This research aimed to elaborate and challenge conventional perceptions and pose some new questions. The most important of these questions concern the political and economic position of the region in the World-systems of the period, the region's economic conditions, the political and economic factors that resulted in the Baḥraynī revolts that brought down the Qarāmiṭa, the nature of the Turkmen's invasion attempts, the ʿUyūnid emirate's institutions, the religious makeup of the region and the relationship of the 'al-Baḥrānī scholars' with Baḥrayn. To meet these aims, the research relied heavily on recent archaeological evidence that had not been used in previous studies of the post-Qarmāṭian period. The research also borrowed approaches and theories from social science to understand a number of aspects of Baḥrayn and its politics, geopolitics and nomadic society, for which the evidence is thin.

The research discussed several subjects: First, it studied the historical geography and economy of Baḥrayn and examined the impact of Baḥrayn's geography on its society, economy and politics. Second, it investigated the political entities that ruled the region throughout the period *c*. 1050–*c*. 1400 CE, which began with revolts against the Qarāmiṭa. These revolts led to the establishment of the emirate of Āl al-Zajjāj on the island of Uwāl in 1050s CE, the emirate of Āl ʿAbbās in al-Qaṭīf 1060s CE), and the ʿUyūnid emirate in al-Aḥsāʾ (1077-1230s CE), which overcame the former emirate and ruled the region for about 160 years. This work also studied the ʿUqaylid/ʿUṣfūrid emirate that succeeded the ʿUyūnid emirate and ruled the inner parts of the region, comprising the city of al-Aḥsāʾ and the deserts of Baḥrayn and central Arabia. The Iranian-based polities that occupied the island of Uwāl and al-Qaṭīf (1230s-*c.*1400 CE) were also discussed. Third, the thesis shed light on the literature produced in the region and attempted to evaluate the relationship between the men of letters and the ʿUyūnid emirate. Finally, the research dealt with the questions of religion, scholars and scholarship in Baḥrayn.

The physical and human geography of Baḥrayn were key factors in shaping the politics, economy and religion of the region. Baḥrayn's relative remoteness from the core centres of Iraq, Egypt and Iran, and Baḥrayn's main towns' surround by sea and desert offered a specific environment for the development of its own religious, economic and socio-political traditions. These features also allowed the region to maintain its autonomy.

The region was something of a peripheral or semi-peripheral area on the scale of World-systems Analysis in its pre-capitalist settings (before the sixteenth century). Baḥrayn *c*.1050-*c*.1400 CE assumed low hierarchical position in the Near East. This was evident in its economy, politics, military, society and culture. The region's characteristics match with David Wilkinson's description for peripheral and semi-peripheral areas.

The economy of the region appears to have been in decline during the first half of this period in question; Baḥrayn's small-scale agricultural activities were confined in the few oases and the three cities in the desert region, which lacked natural resources, except for its pearls bank nearby its shores. The ʿUyūnid emirate (1077-1236 CE) was characterised by weak military capabilities and limited power over the desert and tribes. The nomads constituted a serious threat to the urban authority, overland trade and the agricultural activities, isolating the ʿUyūnid emirate from the neighbouring regions. Moreover, the polity's weak army and lack of naval fleets made it vulnerable to attacks from Iraq and the desert and to naval attacks from Iranian-based polities, which were richer and more powerful. After the collapse of the ʿUyūnids the seaports of the region were annexed by vassal polities of great powers. The inner part of the region was controlled by a dimorphic polity of nomads which was heavily influenced by the Mamlūks in Egypt, with whom they allied politically, militarily and commercially. The region's peripherality is also attested by its lack of scholarly and cultural activities, where folk and unlegalistic sects prevailed. Few men of letters are known and some of them are reported to have left the region for more developed centres in the core power areas.

About a century and a half before the period under question, the Qarmāṭian polity rose to prominence during the tenth and early eleventh centuries. It extended its rule over the entire Arabian Peninsula, along with southern Iraq and Syria, taxing the caliphates of Baghdād and Cairo. By 1050s CE, it had weakened and shrunk to its bases in Baḥrayn/eastern Arabia. They suffered extreme decline in economy which weakened their political rule over Baḥrayn, thus

stimulating local sedentary families of the tribe of ʿAbd al-Qays to revolt and establish their own emirates. This severe decline in Baḥrayn's economy during the Qarāmiṭa's late period resulted from three main factors: a) the absence of tax revenues once collected from many cities outside Baḥrayn; b) the potential boycott of ʿAbbāsid traders because of the Qarāmiṭa's notoriety and the high tax they imposed on those seeking to use Baḥraynī seaports; and c) the diversion of maritime routes from the Gulf to the Red Sea by the Fāṭimids during the eleventh century. This economic decline is recorded in many written sources and is supported by much archaeological evidence, such as recently discovered base metal coins related to the Qarāmiṭa, the ʿUyūnids, the Salghūrids and the Mongols.

A comparison of the economic activities between the two opposite shores of the Gulf shows that Baḥraynī seaports were less active than were their Iranian counterparts with less developed infrastructure for maritime trade. The ʿUyūnids (1077-1230s CE), who ruled the region for about 160 years, devoted great efforts to the internal conflicts among various local political groups, mainly between the rival emirs and the Bedouins. The ʿUyūnid emirs seem to have been orientated towards agriculture, but at the expense of maritime projects, such as rebuilding the damaged seaport of al-ʿUqayr and establishing a military and commercial fleet. Therefore, the Iranian-based polities of the Gulf filled the vacuum, controlling almost all the commercial seaports and securing the lines of communication between them. The island of Kīsh, then the Atābegs of Fārs, followed by the vassal of the Mongols in Fārs and eventually the Kingdom of Hormuz formed powerful naval forces with the mission to capture the important islands and seaports of the whole Gulf and link them in a trade network. For the first time in Islamic history, the seaports of Baḥrayn were integrated to these Iranian-based polities successively from 1230s CE until the late-fifteenth century. The ʿUqaylids, who succeeded the ʿUyūnids, were no better in maritime affairs, perhaps largely because of their nomadic lifeway. They were content with receiving annual payments from the governors of al-Qaṭīf for ceasing their raids.

The ʿUyūnids' other great weakness was a lack of control and influence over the deserts of Baḥrayn. They achieved control only during the formative and reunification periods. For most of their era, the ʿUyūnid 'city-states' only exercised power over the towns. This could be one reason for their absence in the chronicles. The advantage of the ʿUqaylids over desert trade

routes allowed them to play a significant role in the politics and economy of the ʿUyūnid emirate. The ʿUyūnid emirs, who were politically divided into 'city-states' from 1130s onwards, and were in constant struggles with one another, sought military support and loyalty from the ʿUqaylids. In exchange, the emirs paid them money, granted lands/farms and offered kind. The ʿUqaylids eventually became the most powerful political player in the region, which resulted in the transition of power to them in *c*. 1230 CE through merchants likely seeking a stronger ruler capable of maintaining their security and protecting their businesses.

The early years of the ʿUyūnid emirate were challenging due to recurrent Turkmen invasion attempts from Iraq. The secondary literature tends to view these campaigns as instructed and directed by the Seljūq Sultan. However, this present research concluded that this might not have been the case. Rather, these campaigns were likely to have been the initiatives of the Turkmen military leaders who were also chiefs of their Turkmen tribes which previously assisted the Seljūqs in conquering Iran and Iraq. They perhaps sought to establish an autonomous polity in an area relatively far from the central authority of the Seljūq Sultan or to make use of the region's tax revenues. In light of recent scholarship discussing the relationship between the Seljūq Sultans and their tribal leaders, this research argues that the Turkmen who attempted to invade Baḥrayn were likely following a pattern of similar initiatives and campaigns undertaken by other Turkmen generals in other parts of the Near East, especially after the battle of Manzikert in 1071 CE.

Despite their chronic political instability, the ʿUyūnids achieved a relatively high level of civil governance and an administrative system that was not unlike that of the ʿAbbāsids. They established a number of *dawāwīn* (public records or rolls) for several fields, such as the army troops, agricultural land grants, chancery, treasury and ceremonial events. Moreover, during the emirate's periods of power and prosperity, the ʿUyūnid emirs received in their courts poets from Iraq. Although the emirs were generous to these Iraqi panegyrists, they were harsh on local Baḥraynī poets, often subjecting them to prison and confiscation, which caused many to flee the region. Perhaps this double-standard treatment was adopted by the emirs because of the constant rivalry within the ruling family and the nomads. Probably, the emirs in this political situation sought to discourage scholarly activities, such as poetry and religion, because poets or scholars might constitute an additional socio-political rival.

The sporadic rapprochement between the ʿUyūnids and the Caliphate in Iraq appear at times of crisis in a context of ʿAbbāsid endeavor for rebuilding its power by establishing relations with regional polities. The ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Nāṣir required a powerful polity that could protect the caravans in the deserts, while some ʿUyūnid emirs needed the Caliphate's recognition and legitimacy that would serve them in local politics and protect them from Kīshid and Salghūrid naval raids.

The ʿUqaylid polity (1230s-*c.*1400 CE), which was founded in al-Aḥsāʾ, is perhaps best described as a 'dimorphic state', a type of nomadic political entities conceived by the social anthropologist Rowton. This theory was applied by Heidemann to describe nomadic polities that existed in Syria and northern Mesopotamia in a period close to the ʿUqaylids of Baḥrayn. The hypothesis suggests that the nomadic leader in this political entity would act as urban ruler in the city, while depending on and keeping his military power in the desert. During their reign, the ʿUqaylids allied with the Mamlūks in Egypt, who were in a 'cold war' with the Mongols in Iraq. Although the ʿUqaylids' alliance fluctuated or divided between the two empires, they remained closer to the Mamlūks. The ʿUqaylids were very important in this war because of their control over the routes that led to Mecca via the deserts of north and central Arabia. The ʿUqaylids were also important for the Mamlūks because they offered the Mamlūks an alternative supply line to the goods arriving from the East in the flourishing Gulf seaports. The result of this was the ʿUqaylid's access to the Egyptian markets, which later transformed them into professional caravan traders. The ʿUqaylids' later transformation from primarily tribal warriors into caravan leaders was stimulated by two potential factors that may have contributed to the political disunity that led to their decline. First, the end of the Mamlūk-Mongol war in which they took part as clients caused the halt of the imperial sponsorship upon which they depended. Second, the shift in the ʿUqaylids' political and social structure to one better suiting their new economic role dissolved the tribal system of one ruling leader and forming numerous family leaders.

The question of religious 'sects' in Baḥrayn has been misrepresented in many recent writings, possibly sometimes driven by sectarian agendas. Recent historians tended to argue that the Baḥraynī people embraced a single sect, whether it was Shīʿism or Sunnism. However, this present research, which relied on additional archaeological and written sources, suggested that

communities of Ismāʿīlism, Twelverism, Ḥanafism and Shāfiʿism coexisted sometimes in Baḥrayn.

These sects reached Baḥrayn by a variety of ways, the most obvious routes being trade and invasion. Ismāʿīlism arrived with the Qarāmiṭa and their *duʿāt* in the late ninth century. Although the Qarāmiṭa fluctuated in their adoption of this doctrine, it was still embraced by some of the communities in 1050s CE as the *Sharḥ dīwan Ibn al-Muqarrab* shows. This community had a quarrel with the Sunni Ḥanafī community of Uwāl, represented by their leader Abū al-Buhlūl, who staged a revolt against the Qarāmiṭa. He declared his allegiance to the ʿAbbāsid Caliph and wrote a correspondence to him, expressing his belief in Sunnism and the Ḥanafī School of jurisprudence. It is not known how long these sects persisted in the region, but they likely existed for some time, as it is not typical for a sect to disappear suddenly. The disappearance could have been gradual, as the sect was overwhelmingly replaced by popular Twelverism in the early twelfth century and Sunni Shāfiʿism in the early thirteenth century. Evidence shows that Sunni Baḥraynī villagers sent delegations to prominent Sunni scholars in Syria, such as Ibn Taymiyya and others in Iraq to seek fatwas. Also, a body of archaeological evidence support that Twelverism appeared during the ʿUyūnid emirate. The inclination towards Twelverism was likely an appropriate justification for the ʿUyūnid emirate to free itself from direct subjection and from paying allegiances and taxes to Caliphates of the Ismāʿīlī Fāṭimids in Egypt and the Sunni ʿAbbāsids in Iraq.

The nature of religion in Baḥrayn appears to have been popular rather than legalistic which is due to the region's peripherality, weak economy and lack of political patronage of scholarship. There is no clear written evidence on how Twelverism arrived in Baḥrayn. However, the literature speaks of the frequent travels of poets between Baḥrayn and Iraq and archaeological surveys in Baḥrayn discovered Shīʿī objects (*turba*) from Mashhad belonged to the thirteenth century, which suggests the doctrine found its way from there. It is also possible that scholars, missionaries or students took the same routes (Iraq and Iran) and brought Twelverism to Baḥrayn. Yet, the Baḥraynī people held distinctive rituals that differed from Twelver doctrines in more developed cities: an ʿUyūnid emir took the title of *al-Qāʾim* while in the same time acknowledging the Twelfth Imām *al-Ḥujja* in another inscription, which might reflect his 'unorthodox' or unlegalistic practice of Twelverism. It may also be said the emir

needed to appeal to different religious communities in his polity. In addition, people in al-Qaṭīf performed an unusual version of *adhān* which differed from the versions of *adhān* prescribed in Twelver and Ismāʿīlī *fiqh* manuals. It is also reported that the first scholar to have established the study of *ḥadīth* in Uwāl occurred in 1653 CE during the Safavid rule in Uwāl/Bahrain. This suggests that before this date Uwāl lacked an essential tool, on which to rely and to form a legalistic or 'orthodox' Twelverism.

The question of scholars and scholarship in Baḥrayn has also suffered some misrepresentation in modern writings. This present research casts doubts concerning the view that Baḥrayn was home to a number of Twelver scholars, including Rāshid ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baḥrānī (1208 CE), ʿAlī ibn Saʿāda al-Baḥrānī (d.1270s CE), ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (d.1270s CE) and Maytham ibn ʿAlī al-Baḥrānī (d.1283 CE), all of whom held the *nisba* of al-Baḥrānī. They were thought to have been born and died in Baḥrayn. However, although this research proved that Twelverism existed in Baḥrayn from the twelfth century during the ʿUyūnid emirate 1077-1230s CE onwards, and that Twelver scholars and students may have visited or lived in Baḥrayn, it argued that there is no contemporary evidence supporting that the aforementioned scholars were among them. No evidence showed that they were indeed from Baḥrayn or died in Baḥrayn as claimed later on the basis of their *nisba*. This work argued that the earliest appearances of such view were about four to five centuries after the scholars' death in the works of the Baḥraynī Safavid scholars, Sulaymān al-Māḥūzī al-Bahrānī (d.1709 CE) and his student ʿAbdullāh al-Samāhījī (1723 CE). It seems that Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī depended solely on the *nisba* of the scholars to attribute them to Baḥrayn without depending on traditional authorities of knowledge, such as books, *isnāds* or *ijāzāt* that included information on their origins or places of birth, residence or tombs. During this period the Safavid Empire was active in propagating *uṣūlī* Twelverism and rewriting the history of Twelverism. Many *ḥadīth* compilations and biographical dictionaries were made during the time of Majlisī, including the works of Sulaymān and al-Samāhījī, who both were closely associated with the Safavid administration and held leading official positions.

Finally, this conclusion offers several recommendations to scholars for future research. The research of Baḥrayn's medieval history is still young. To enrich the historical study, several steps should be followed. First, although the archaeologists who studied the archaeological

remains (especially the inscriptions) presented in this research have done good work, the inscriptions are still in need of better deciphering and reading. Second, very few archaeological excavations have been done in the city of al-Qaṭīf and the historical villages surrounding it; therefore, little material has been discovered. Thus, archaeological studies should focus on these areas as soon as possible, before governmental infrastructural projects are undertaken. Third, more work exploring Arabic and Persian manuscripts in the archives, especially in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran is needed. Fourth, the text of *Sharḥ dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab* has been mainly subjected to strict literal interpretation. This approach should be augmented with the modern approaches of literary theory. These approaches may yield better analyses of the text and thus the history of the ʿUyūnid emirate. Lastly, although the study of core areas, great empires, famous dynasties and rulers is more tempting to researchers, peripheral and semi-peripheral areas have played small, yet delicate and pivotal roles in the midst of great historical events. These areas, including historical Baḥrayn, should be integrated into the wider context of Islamic history.

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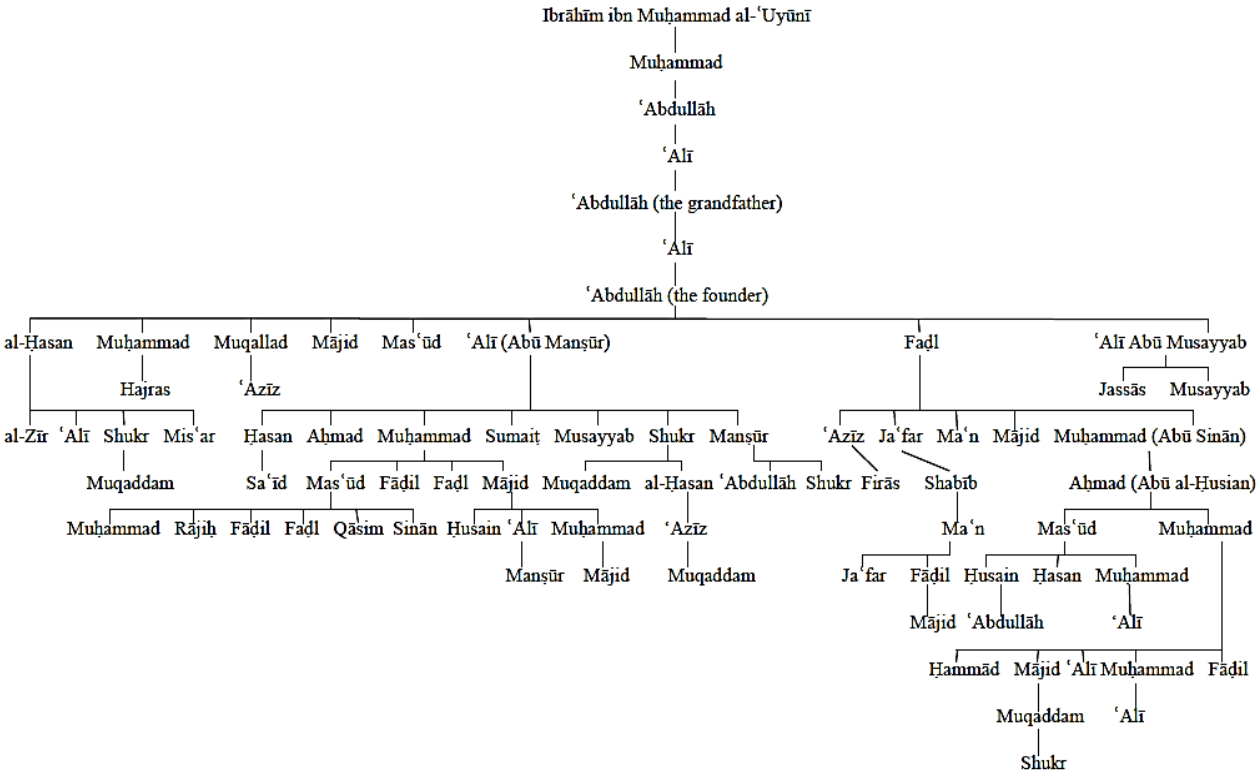
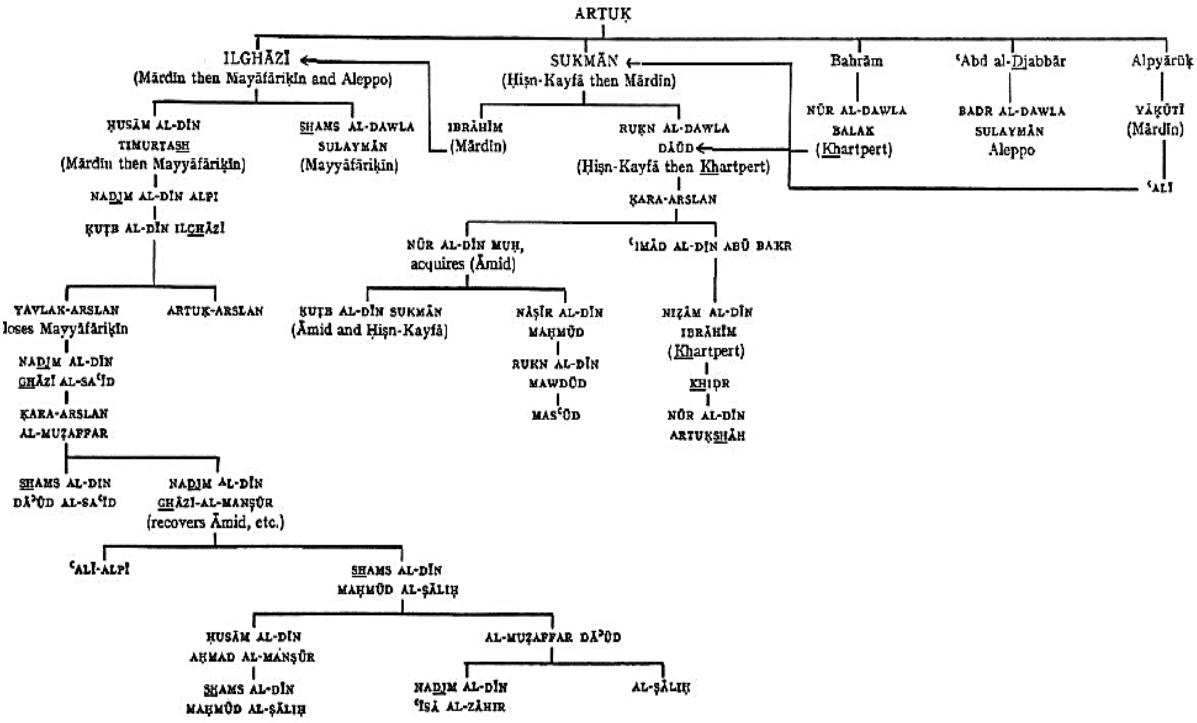
Appendix 1: The Family Tree of the ʿUyūnids.*



** This family tree is transliterated from the appendix of al-Janbī's (et al) edition of *Sharḥ Dīwān Ibn al-Muqarrab*, vol.3, p.551.

Appendix 2: The Family Tree of the Urtuqids, taken from Claude Cahen, 'Artukids'. *EI*[2].



Appendix 3: The Family Tree of the Ṭībid Family. Adapted from Jean Aubin, 'Les Princes d'Ormuz du XIIIe au XVe siècle,' *Journal Asiatique* 241 (1953): 138.